Encyclopaedia of Indian History

ANCIENT • MEDIEVAL • MODERN

ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF INDIAN HISTORY

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(VOLUME IV)

by

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Preface

The four-volume publication *Encyclopaedia of Indian History* has caught the imagination of the readers The growing popularity of these books among the post-graduate students and researches in the history of India is evidenced by the ever increasing correspondence of the editor with them as also by the challenge of press review from scholars from various parts of the country The editor highly appreciate comments on and critical evaluation of this books by those interested in the subject, he always bears in mind their valuable suggestion for qualitative improvement of the material wherever necessary

We are passing through a very serious socio-cultural and national crisis today The rising tide of fundamentalism, regional and parochial outlook, and the racial and linguistic controversies threaten the very fabric of composite Indian culture and the concept of secular nation-state, evolved laboriously by one of our ancestors—Akbar, The Great, and so fondly cherished by the modern Indian leadership This book does not have a direct bearing on all these aspects, nevertheless, it may provide, in historical perspective, an insight into the causes and remedies of some of these problems to the readers

A brief resume on the survey of sources, which

precedes the text in all of the four volumes of this study by way of an introduction, may give an idea to the scholars of history, particularly the subject-specialists, of the deep involvement of the author in the field of his study and research As a matter of fact, it reveals but a tip of the iceberg of the source-material on Indian history which the editor has built over the last twenty-five years

Editor

Contents

56

The Revolt of 1857

The view of the British historians was that the outbreak of 1857 was a Mutiny The fashion was originally set by the Government of the day Earl Stanley, the then Secretary of State for India, while reporting the events of 1857 to Parliament, used the term "Mutiny" and most of the English writers on the subject followed his lead and writers like Charles Ball, G W Forrest, T R Holmes, M Innes, J W Kaye, G F Macmunn, G B Malleson, C T Metcalfe, Earl Roberts and others used the term "Mutiny" in this connection Sir John Lawrence was of the opinion that the Mutiny had its origin in the army and its cause was the greased cartridges and nothing else It was not attributable' to any antecedent conspiracy whatsoever, although it was taken advantage of by the mutineers to increase their number The view of Sir John Seeley was that the Mutiny was a wholly unpatriotic and selfish sepoy mutiny with no native leadership and no popular support " The British officers conducting the trial of Bahadur Shah II held him responsible for originating the Mutiny in conspiracy with the Shah of Iran and other Muslim rulers of the Middle East Sir Theophilius Metcalfe deposed in the trial of Bahadur Shah that six weeks before the outbreak, a seditious poster was found pasted on the walls of Jama Masjid proclaiming that the Shah of Iran would invade India and all the Muslims should be ready to join the Jehad

British historians are of the view that Nana Sahib organised the revolution long before its outbreak at Meerut To quote Kaye, "For months, for years, indeed ever since the failure of the mission to England had been apparent, they had been quietly, spreading their network of intrigue all over the country From one native court to another, from one extremity to another of the Great Continent of India, the agents of Nana Sahib had passed with overtures and invitations, discretely perhaps mysteriously worded, to princes and chiefs of different races and religions, but most hopeful of all to the Marathas Nana Sahib's two most important agents were Rungo Bapoji in the South and Azimullah in the North "

There were also writers who considered the revolt of 1857 the result of a Hindu conspiracy The Hindus were said to have a genius for conspiracy "They possess a power of patience of foreseeing results, of carefully weighing chances, of choosing time and weapon, of protfiting by circumstances, never losing sight of the object desired, taking advantage of every turn of fortune—all qualities invaluable for success in intrigue " It was contended that the circulation of the Chapatis was originated by the Hindus and the rebellion was successfully engineered by the emissaries of the Peshwa under the guidance of Nana Sahib

The view of Dr Alexander Duff was that the revolt was neither Hindu not Muslim in character It was the spontaneous outcome of the fraternising sepoys of all casts and creeds

The view of Lord Canning, the then Governor-General of India, was struggle which we have had has been wore like a national war than a local insurrection In its magnitude, duration, scale of expenditure and in some of its moral features, it

partakes largely of the former character "

The view of Thompson and Garratt is that for four months during the summer of 1857, it seemed that the Mutiny might develop into a real War of Independence, hut by September 1857, it was clear that the Indians who were in revolt were incapable of working to any settled plan or of subordinating themselves to a national leader Their prestige was warning and their commanders had proved themselves incompetent except in guerrilla warfare They conclude by observing that the Mutiny may be considered either as a military revolt, or as a bid for the recovery of their property and privileges by dispossessed princes and landlords or as an attempt to restore the Mughal Empire or as a peasants war

Professor P E Roberts accepts the view of John Lawrence and Seeley and observes that the Mutiny was mainly military in origin but it occur red at a time when for various reasons there was social and political discontent in the country and the mutineers took advantage of the same

Many Indian writers have described the events of 1857 as a War Of Independence V D Savarkar wrote his book called "War of Indian Independence" in which he tried to show how the Mutiny was really a War of Indian Independence Asoka Mehta has pointed out to the national character of mutiny in his book entitled 1857, The Great Rebellion " He admits that the sepoys were the mainstay of the rebellion and they bore the brunt of the struggle to break the chains that imprisoned India They gave the backbone to the resistance and became its shield and spear However, besides the sepoys millions of Indians took part in the rebellion The number of the civilians killed was as large as that of the sepoys They joined the struggle to

free their country and to redress their grievances The rapidity with which the revolt spread shows that in some areas at least, the rebellion enjoyed strong mass support At many stations, the sepoy were egged on to action by the citizens Those who sided with the British had to face social ostracism Those who could not join openly, non-co-operated with the British General Havelock could not get boats and boatmen to ferry his soldiers across the river Although labourers at Kanpur were pressed into service by the British, they managed to escape at night At many places, the natives of all classes tried to keep aloof from the British The decisive evidence showing the national character of the rebellion is the note of common harmony it struck in both the Hindus and Muslim, Even the British Government found it difficult to separate the two communities The Mughal Emperor prohibited the cow slaughter throughout the country to conciliate the Hindus In a letter to Rajas of Rajputana, the Mughal Emperor wrote, "It is my ardent wish to see that the Feringi is driven out of Hindustan by all means and at any cost It is my ardent wish that the whole of Hindustan should be free, but the Revolutionary War that is being waged for the purpose will not be crowned with success unless a man capable of sustaining the whole burden of the movement, who can organise and concentrate the different forces of the nation and unify the whole people in himself, comes forward to guide the rising I have no desire left of ruling over India after the expulsion of the English for my own aggrandizement If all of your native Rajas are ready to un-sheath your sword to drive away the enemy, then I am willing to resign imperial powers and authority in the hands of any confederacy of native princes who are chosen to exercise it" The Hindus responded to the offer of the

Muslims Nana Saheb declared his allegiance to the Mughal Emperor It was only after the fan of Delhi that the Sikhs joined the British army in large numbers All this shows that the Mutiny was a national rising, although on a limited scale

In his book entitled "Eighteen Fifty Seven", Dr S N Sen says that the story of the chapatis lends some colour to the theory of prior preparation, propaganda and conspiracy The view of Wilson was that a date and time had been fixed for a simultaneous rising at all the military stations of India, but he did not give any evidence in support of his view His view is contradicted by the known facts The rising at Meerut was not premeditated and the same was the case at other places The sepoys and their leaders were not in league with any foreign power The only foreign power which was approached by the rebels was that of Nepal and that was done after the collapse of the mutiny and not during it The remarkable thing about the mutiny was that it had its recruits from many sources, The movement began as a military Mutiny, but it was not confined to the army Moreover, the army as a whole did not join the revolt and a considerable section of the army actively fought on the side of the government Every disarmed regiment was not necessarily disloyal and every deserter was not a mutineer The rebels came from every section of the population At all stages, both Hindus and Muslims were well represented in the rebel army Nana had his Azimullah Khan, Bahadur Khan his Sobha Ram and the Rani of Jhansi her trusted Afghan guards Outside Avadh and Shababad, there was no evidence of that general sympathy which would invest the mutiny with the dignity of a national war At the same time, it is wrong to dismiss it as a military rising The mutiny

became a revolt and assumed a political character when the mutineers of Meerut placed themselves under the king of Delhi and a section of the landed aristocracy and civil population declared in his favour "What began as a fight for religion, ended as a war of independence, for here was not the hightest doubt that the rebels wanted to get rid of the alien government and restore the old order of which the King of Delhi was the rightful representative " The revolt assumed national dimensions in Avadh although in a limited sense, The Mutiny was not a war between the white and the black No normal issue was involved Truth was the first casualty and both sides were guilty of false propaganda According to Dr Sen, the struggle may be described as "a war of fanatic religonists against Christians " The Mutiny was not a conflict between barbarism and civilisation, it was an inhuman fight between the People driven mail by hatred and fear, Burning and hanging expeditions were an important routine and no distinction was made between the innocent and the guilty The Mutiny was inevitable because no dependent nation could have ever reconciled itself to foreign domination A despotic government must ultimately rule by the sword and in India sword was in the custody of the sepoy army Between the sepoys and the English masters, there were no common ties of race, language and religion The Mutiny was inherent in the constitution of the Empire

In "History of the Freedom Movement in India " Dr Tara Chand says that it is misleading to use the term Mutiny to describe the upheaval of 1857-8 There was no doubt that the army was abundantly involved in the revolt It was equally true that drive was supplied by Bengal Army, although there were signs of

disaffection in some regiments in the other Presidencies also However, the outbreak was not confined to the army It was not a Mutiny in the ordinary sense of the term Its causes were deeper than those involved to various authorities military discipline Dr Tara Chand has referred to various authorities in support of his view

Dr Tara Chand comes to the conclusion that while it is inappropriate to give the designation "Mutiny" to the events of 1857, it was also not proper to call them "The national war of independence " It has to be admitted that the war against the British was not inspired by any sentiment of nationalism because in 1857 India was not yet politically a nation It is true that the Hindus and Muslims co-operated, but the leaders and followers of the two communities were moved by personal loyalties rather than by loyalty to a common motherland Nonetheless, the upheaval of 1857 was a war for the liberation in of India from the yoke of the foreigner because he had given mortal offence to the dignity and self-respect of the ruling class which exercised social influence and carried the burden of administration He had also antagonised the masses by his oppressive land revenue policy and by his economic measure, which ruined their arts and crafts On the whole, the rising of 1851 was an attempt to halt the process of dissolution of the medieval order The uprising of 1857 was a general movement of the traditional elite of the Muslims and the Hindus—princes, landholders, soldiers, scholars and theologians The Emperor of Delhi, the King of Avadh, some Nawabs and Rajas, Talukdars and Zamindars and the soldiers, whether Pathans, Mughals, Rajputs, or Brahmins of northern India, comprised the main body of the rebels The class

composition of the insurgents reflected the geographical disposition of the movement and sheds light upon the motives of the participants There is no doubt that practically all those who belonged to this order were disaffected although some of them abstained from active participation on account of their peculiar circumstances The chiefs and landlords constituted the leadership of this rebellious host, the regular and irregular troops of the English East India Company and of the princes, its fighting arm and their dependents and peasants became followers They had common traditions and common grievances, They sympathised with one another in their misfortune The loss of territory and political power affected them all If the higher section was deprived of the titles of authority, the others had lost avenues of employment and position of influence anti profit Scholars, theologians, poets, craftsmen and artists were left without patronage Many of those whose hereditary occupation was fighting, were rendered jobless and many was obliged to drift into the army of the tnglish East India Company Dr Tara Chand refers to the charge sheets drawn by the leaders of the movement against the British Government in support of his view

The view of Dr R C Majumdar is that the revolt of 1857 was not at all a national movement He has given many facts and figures to show that its leaders had their own axes to grind They were not inspired by any feelings of nationalism as such There was no cordiality between the Hindus and the Muslims Rahadur Shah did not heartily cooperate with the mutineers Rani Jhansi also did not side with them at the [illegible]nning and actually did so when she was faced [illegible]ial by the British Government The Muslim [illegible]id not treat their Hindu subjects properly

even during the days of the mutiny Dr Majumdar points out that the Muslims as a community had their special grievances against the British who had deprived them of their former paramountcy In spite of that Muslim swords were pointed against the Hindus rather than against the British and many Hindus prayed for the collapse of the mutiny The mutineer sepoys of both the communities freely sacked Indian towns and murdered their fellow countrymen Not one voice was heard to cry "Let me die so that India be free!" Once the British launched their campaign of ruthless suppression and reprisal, all "rebels" were obliged to fight on to save their skin The view of Dr Majumdar is that the true significance of "1857" lies in the inspiration which its memory afforded to the later freedom movements and for such inspirational purpose, it matters nothing that the sordid and unhappy facts have become shrouded in a fog of pious make-beliefs

We may conclude with the following words of Asoka Mehta "The rebellion of 1857 was more than a mere sepoy mutiny and was an eruption of the social volcano wherein many pent-up forces found vent After the eruption, the whole social topography had changed The scars of the rebellion remained deep and shining"

Causes of revolt political

The Revolt of 1857 can be attributed to many causes As regards the political cause, Dalhousie's doctrine of lapse and annexation of the territories of the native rulers had created a spirit of uneasiness and suspicion through out India The Punjab was annexed in 1849 The Raja of Satara died in 1848 and Dalhousie did not recognise the adoption of a son made by him before his death and annexed the state of Satara, The Raja of Nagput died in 1853 Dalhousie did not recognise the

adopted son and the British resident took possession of the territory The ruler of Jhansi died in 1853 and Dalhousie refused to recoguise his adopted son and annexed the state In 1853, Berar was annexed In 1856, the state of Avadh was annexed although its ruler had always been faithful to the British Government This annexation angered the soldiers of the English East India Company most of whom came from Avadh They had now to pay higher taxes on the lands held by their families in Avadh The British Government confiscated the estates of a majority of the Taluqdars or Zamindars and they became the opponents of the British rule in India The annexation of Avadh was resented not only by the Muslims but also by the other rulers of India, it created among them a spirit of despair Even the most faithful and loyal among them could not be sure of their future The British Government had ordered that on the death of the last Mughal Emperor, his successor was to give tip his ancestral palace and leave something of its royal splendour Remarks made by high British officials created the impression that the Government had made up its minds to put an end to the native states Sir Charles Napier is said to have observed, "Were I the Emperor of India for 12 years, no Indian prince should exist The Nizam should be no more heard of Nepal would be ours " Stopping the annual pension of £80,000 to Nana Sahib, the adopted last Peshwa Baji Rao II, the British made him their deadly enemy The Hindus regarded him as the legitimate successor of Baji Rao and his exclusion was considered to be unjust He proved himself to be a prince among conspirators

The annexation of a native state not only deposed the King, but also limited the scope of the Indians to

get higher administrative jobs That created bitterness among the higher strata of the Indian society At the time of the settlement of newly acquired territories, the old claims of the native aristocracy were severely scrutinized by the officials who favoured the peasants against the landlords That also created bitterness Lord Bentinck's resumption of rent-free lands brought a lot of money to the Government, but reduced to poverty many landowners whose title deeds had been lost or who had held land by long prescriptive right In the five years preceding the mutiny, the famous Inam Commission in Bombay confiscated about 20,000 estates After the annexation of Avadh, Jackson was appointed Chief Commissioner for Settlement, He critically examined the titles of the Taluqdars and most of them were left without any means of subsistence The native army was disbanded and about 60,000 men lost their livelihood The discontented soldiers and Taluqdars joined the ranks of the rebels

The English officers were aloof, exacting and unimaginative Even the best among them "insulted the native gentry whenever 'they had the Opportunity to do so The administrative machinery was inefficient and insufficient The strain on it was so great that whenever a new territory was conquered and annexed it roused a very bail feeling and led to many agrarian outrage_ " Even the landlords were refused the right of adoption and their estates were confiscated by the government 'The lot of the landlords was so bad that it was difficult for them to raise loans even at 30 per cent or 40 per cent of the value of the land There was a lot of uncertainty about land The government officials very often cancelled private transfers of land and interfered even with the decisions of the courts The Raja of Manpur was deprived of 116 out of 158

villages Another Raja had his Taluka curtailed by the severance of 139 villages out of 216 villages The Collector was ordered by the Sadar Board not to carry the decree passed in his favour into effect Many Taluqdars lost half of their villages and the others lost their all Heavy assessments and increased duties made them frantic

Courts of law tried to bring all the people on the same footing The British officials took pride in introducing the principle of civil equality among the people It was found that the principle of civil equality was not applied to Europeans The caste spirit permeated the whole administration When the system of flogging for civil offences was abolished, a period of imprisonment was substituted for the same These changes were not approved of by the people

Religious

One of the causes of the revolt was the fear among the Hindus that their religion will be destroyed by Christianity Both the army and civil population were under the fear that the Government intended to make everybody a Christian as the Mohammedans had done before Missionary activity was extended by the Englishmen in all parts of tht country On many occasions, the meeting of the missionaries were held at the headquarters of the districts under the chairmanship of the Collectors The Hindu law of property was changed with a view to facilitate the connversion of the Hindus to Christianity Formerly, a convert from Hinduism was not allowed to inherit property but that hurdle was removed by the enactment of the Converts' Inheritance Act in, 1850 The British wide no secret of their intention to convert the Indians to Christianity Mr Mangles, Chairman of the Directors of the East India Company, made the

following statement in the House of Commons "Providence has entrusted the extensive Empire of Hindustan to England in order that the banner of Christ should wave triumphant from one end of India to the other Every one must exert all his strength that there may be no dilatoriness on any account in continuing in the country the grand work of, making all Indians Christians " Rev M A Sherring stated thus in 1858-59 in "The Indian Church during the Great Rebellion," "The whole land has been shaken by the missions to its innermost centre The Hindu trembles for his religion, the Mohammedan for his " The Friend of India, a Calcutta newspaper, published the following extract from a correspondent, "All classes of natives imagine that they are to be converted by force Amongst the native soldiery this erroneous imagination dangerously exists " The sepoys in the Bengal army had come to believe that the foreigners wanted to make them Christians The Bengal Hurkaru wrote that the sepoys had come to believe that he Governor-General of India had promised the Home Government to convert them all in three years Lt Col Wheeler distributed tracts and was Considered unfit for his post When asked to explain his conduct, be admitted that he was in the habit of speaking to be natives of all classes about Christianity and he did that "from a conviction that every converted Christian is expected or commanded by the scriptures to make' known the glad tidings of salvation to his lost fellow-creatures " Answering the charge of preaching conversion, he categorically admited "As to the question whether I have endeavoured to convert sepoys and others to Christianity, I would humbly reply that has been my object " Lord Canning, Governor-General of India, passed the following orders on the conduct of Wheeler, "I allude the rumours which reached the

government that Col Wheeler had lately addressed the men of his regiment on religious subjects Col Wheeler's answers were not satisfactory but no punishment was given " No wonder a lot of dissatisfaction was created There was bitter controversy on the subject of conversion in the Calcutta Press Even the Governor-General was accused of conniving at the conversion of Indians to Christianity He was guilty of subscribing to every society which had for its object 'the conversion of the natives Lord Canning's subscriptions to the Bible Societies and missionary associations were , matter of common knowledge Col Sykes refuted in the House of Commons the, charge that Christianity was nor encouraged by the Government of the East India Company He quoted reliable figures to show the ever-increasing employment of chaplains and Bishops in India from 183637 to 185556 He drew his information from a return read before the House of Commons and asserted that "It will be borne in mind that all this outlay of £2,453,882 in 20 years for Christian purposes was from taxes paid by heathens " He further observed, "Why in India the Company proclaimed its Christianity at the cannon's mouth by saluting the Bishops when they arrived at military stations? The sepoys necessarily asked the cause of the salute and were told it was to the Head of the Christian Church, the Lord Padre Sahib!" Lord Dalhousie wrote thus, "It is announced as a certain fact of very great significance that the young Prince, Maharaja Duleep Singh had entered into the Christian Community and it is announced also as a matter of great significance that the daughter of the Raja of Coorg had been baptised, and that our Gracious Sovereign was her godmother "

The Commissioner at Fatehpur had put up at his own expense, four pillars at each entrance to the city inscribed in Urdu and Hindi with the "Ten Commandments "

Most of the missionaries who came to India were intolerant, dogmatic and fired by the Victorian zeal and they quoted the Old Testament more often than the New They regarded the conversion of the whole country to Christianity as only a matter of time and they considered it "ripe for the harvest " They were everywhere, not only in their churches but in prisons, schools and market places The Indians did not object to, their propagating their religion, but they found that they were not con tent with explaining Christ, but were also busy ridiculing the rites and practices of the Indians The missionaries claimed a "monopoly truth" for Christianity They regarded it not only as their vocation but also, their positive ditty to convert everyone with a dark skin, India was to be not only a jewel in the British Crown, but also a Christian jewel They believed that the country was being governed for the good of its inhabitants and Christianity was a part of it

No wonder, the leaders of the revolution of 1857 raised the cry of religion and faith in danger and the Indian sepoys rallied round their banner The famous Delhi Proclamation issued between 11 May and 15 May 1857 declared that all Europeans were united on the Point of depriving the Army of their religion and to convert them to Christianity by the force of strong measures In his Proclamation of 6 July, 18571, Nana Sahib declared that the Englishmen had calculated that seven or eight thousand Europeans would be sufficient to convert all the people of India to Christianity A Proclamation issued by Bahadur Shah

on 25 August 1857 called 'upon the Pandits, Fakirs and other learned persons to join the holy way against the English, who stood condemned by the Sunnah and the Sastras It was declared that the people of Hindustan, both Hindus and Muslims, had been Milled under the tyranny and oppression of the Englishmen In his circular letter dated 2 January 1858, addressed to the Chiefs of Bundelkhand, Shrimant Maharaja Peshwa Bahadur, the nephew of Nana Sahib, called upon them to defend their faith The Rani of Jhansi accused Englishmen of having over-thrown our religions They had caused books to be written and circulated throughout the country and brought a number of pressures to spread their religion Maulvi Liaquat Ali of Allahabad openly declared Jehad and incited the Muslims to massacre all the Christians A similar call was made to the Muslims by Birjees Kudur Wali of Oudh in his Proclamation In his proclamation dated 17 February, 1858, Mirza Feroz Shahzada accused the English of committing all kinds of excesses and tyrannies with the object of converting Indians to Christianity by force and of subverting and doing away with the religions of the Hindus and Muslims He called upon the people to join Jehad against die British

Military

As regard& the Military cause, there was lot of discontentment among the Indian soldiers, The highest pay attainable by a Sepoy as Subedar of the infantry was less than the minimum pay of a raw European recruit Very often there was no promotion of an Indian soldier He may enter as a Risaldar and retire as a Risaldar The Government did not trust the Indian soldiers "In every company there are two or three native officers who, when they are too, good, are

discharged from service with full pay on retirement, on the pretext of rewarding them So soon as Sepoys, be, come attached to them, so soon as they encroach upon the admiration and respect which must be the exclusive property of European officers, they are immediately discharged " The self-respect of the Sepoys was trampled upon at every step "It is by no means uncommon for an officer to curse and swear at his men on parade and use most disgusting terms of a use to them " A contemporary English observer wrote "The Sepoy is esteemed as an inferior creature, He is swored at He is treated roughly He is spoken as a 'Nigger ' He is addressed as 'Suar' or pig The younger men treated him as an inferior animal "

The number of British troops in India was never very large but the Company was able to recruit without trouble from the native Indians, With the British in the ratio of one in four thousand, the ratio of troops had been fixed by a former Governor-General as one British soldier to three native soldiers and had never been less than one to four, On account of the Crimean War and the trouble in Burma, China and Persia, the ratio had been allowed to become almost one to eight There were 40,160 European troops as against 3,11,000 native troops and among them were 5,362 British officers

Originally, the native soldiers were low-caste Afghan or Turkish mercenaries With a view to make the army more national, the sons of the landowners and peasants were deliberately recruited In the army of Bengal, three-fifths of the men serving in the 63 infantry regiments came from Avadh, "the nursery of soldiers " As the servants of the British in their home, they were treated there as nothing or even with contempt as the British against the corrupt native

government However, when Avadh was annexed in 1856, all their privileges disappeared When they went home, they were treated there as nothing or even with contempt as the slaves of the British Many of them were Brahmins while the cavalry consisted of Muslims

It is true that the native soldiers seemed to be loyal to the British, but there had been previous instances of trouble among them In 1806 there had been a mutiny of the native soldiers, a Vellore when they were ordered to wear a new style of head-dress which included a leather cockade believed to be made of cow hide or pig skin In 1824, a regiment which was ordered to go to Burma defied the orders on account of a dispute over cooking pots and also because they believed they were to be transported 41 sea in defiance of their caste feelings In 1852, the 38th Native Infantry reused to cross the sea to Burma However, in 1856, the General Service Enlistment Act was passed to give the authorities absolute power to take soldiers, out of India To cross the Kala Pani was pollution to the orthodox Hindus who considered themselves to be reduced in caste No Indian soldier would eat salt pork or ship's biscuits This was very much rested as the new law was to apply to all the future entrants to the which was considered to be a monopoly of a class of people in the country

The increased ratio of Indian troops to British troops gave a sense of self-confidence to the Indians There were small mutinies or near-mutinies at different places 'These were signs of hatred between the white and coloured people Almost all of them were caused by the fear that the British were trying to break caste and convert the sepoys to Christianity Rumours started circulating among the native soldiers It was rumoured that all the Company's armies had

been killed in Burma and all the British in the Crimea It was said that English women were to be brought to India to marry Indian princes whose children would then become Christians and all sepoys would be baptised There was to be a mass murder of sepoys by a mine under the parade ground The British had polluted the sugar and mixed ground bullox's bones with flour and the sepoys were to be forced to eat cow's flesh Although the government heard all these rumours, it did nothing to discount them, Ignoring the fact that the Indian soldiers regarded service in the form of a trade guild in which son followed father in the handling of weapons, the government officers continued to disregard their customs and religions, 'Though outwardly all seemed to be calm, below the surface, there was a highly inflammable situation and some common cause was required to unite the different religions against the British and that was provided by the introduction of the greased cartridges

The Greased cartridges

The Government of India decided to replace the old heavy brown Bess smooth-broke musket with which most of the Company's army was equipped with new Enfield rifle which had proved very effective in the Crimean War To load the new rifle entailed extracting from a pouch a cartridge with a greased patch at the top which was torn off with the teeth and then used to assist in ramming the bullet down the barrel 'The sepoys began to believe that the grease used in this case was made from the fat of a cow or that of a pig To both the Hindus and the Muslims the use of the greased cartridge was something which was against their religion The sepoys saw in it an attempt to break their caste and force them to become Christians

At first slowly and then with increasing anger as the stories were spread by agitators, the Indian regiments refused to accept the greased cartridges, General Hearsey and others warned the government against the use of the greased cartridges which seemed to be causing so much anger and distress among the sepoys and suggested that the sepoys be allowed to make their own grease, but they were over-ruled by Adjutant-General who felt that it might make the sepoys think that the old cartridges which they had been using were contaminated On his advice, Lord Canning decided that the concession would be weakness and he ordered that the cartridges must be used The British officers who under-stood their men, were astonished It is stated that Captain Edward Martineau, musketry instructor at Ambala, angrily pointed out to a member of the staff of the Commander-in-Chief that the order had produced "all the elements of combustion " Loyal servants began to drop hints of sepoys meeting to plot mutiny The information was passed on to Anson who was the Commander-in Chief of India but nothing was done to redress the grievance of the people

In the following couplet, Bahadur Shah described how the mighty Englishmen who boasted of having defeated Russia and Iran, had been overthrown in India by a simple cartridge

"Na Iran ne kiya na Shah Russne,
Angrez ko Tabah Kiya Kartoos (Cartouche) ne "

On 26 February 1857, the 19th Native Infantry at Behrampur refused to use the cartridges and was marched to Barrackpore to be disbanded under the eyes of a British regiment specially brought back from Burma On 29 March, 1857, Mangal Pande, a young officer of 34th native infantry, fired at his British

Adjutant and Sergeant-Major and called upon his comrades to join him, The guard,, did not join but also did not disarm him The result was that Mangal Pande wounded both the Englishmen with his sword and they were also struck by the guards with their muskets, General Hearsey interfered He roared, "The first man who refuses to match when I give the order is a dead man " The, guards submitted and followed him Mangal Pande lost his nerve He was caught and hanged, The 34th native infantry was disbanded on 6 May, 1857 and its soldiers left for their homes which in many cases was Avadh

At this critical time when the Bengal Army was simmering with revolt, there was no one in command As was usual in the hot weather, General Anson and the whole of his headquarter staff had taken themselves off to Simla With the British troops and officers on leave, the whole military area of the Bengal command was virtually without central direction The command was left to the seven Divisional Commanders Major-General William Hewitt of the Meerut Division was almost 70 and unfit for active service The British troops bad been thinned out even more with the recent conquest of the Punjab in 1849 and more troops had to be sent to the North-Western Frontier Most of them were now north of Meerut and Ambala, At Calcutta, there was one infantry battalion, the next was 400 miles away at Dinapur and there were others at Agra and Lucknow The result was that in an area half as much as Europe, there were only four battalions and a few reliable batteries of artillery It was not difficult for the troublemakers to see that their opportunity to strike had come

On 23 April, 1857, the Commanding Officer of the 3rd Light Cavalry, Colonel Smyth, ordered a parade of

the regimental skirmishers, 85 picked men, and demanded of them, one after the other, if they would accept the cartridges One after the other, the men refused, only 5 of them agreeing When Smyth made his report to Hewitt, he had no option but to set up a Court of Inquiry and when the findings were passed on to Anson, the Commander-in-Chief, he insisted that all the 85 men must be Court martialled for mutiny A Court of 15 Indian officers of both Hindu and Muslims faiths was assembled On 8 May all of them were found guilty and sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment with hard labour on the roads On 10 May, the excited cavalry men attacked the jail where the 85 persons were imprisoned The guard made no resistance and all of them were set free There was a general revolt The British officers were killed and the mutineers set off for Delhi

The revolt

When the Meerut soldiers appeared in Delhi the next morning, the local infantry joined them, killed their own European officers and seized the city Bahadur Shah, the Mughal Emperor of Delhi, was put on the throne Delhi became the centre of the revolt and Bahadur Shah its symbol The rebellious sepoys from all over the country turned towards Delhi and all the Indian chiefs who took part in the revolt proclaimed their loyalty to the Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah also wrote letters to all the Chiefs and rulers of India, asking them to organise a confederacy of Indian states to fight and replace the British regime

The entire Bengal Army rose in revolt, Avadh, Rohilkhand, the Doab, Bundelkhand, Central India, large parts of Bihar and East Punjab shook off British authority In many Indian States, the rulers remained loyal to the British Government but their soldiers

revolted or were on the brink of revolt Many of the soldiers of Indore State rebelled and joined the sepoys More than 20,000 troops of the ruler of Gwalior went over to Tantia Tope and Rani of Jhansi Many small chiefs of Rajasthan and Maharashtra revolted with the support of the people who were hostile to the British Government There were local rebellious in Hyderabad and Bengal, Both in Northern and Central India, the mutiny of the sepoys was followed by the popular revolts of the civilian population After the sepoys had destroyed British authority, the common people rose up in arms and fought with their spears and axes, bows and arrows, lathis and scythes and crude muskets At many places, the people revolted even before the sepoys did or even when no sepoy regiments were present, In Uttar Pradesh and Bihar the peasants and zamindars attacked the moneylenders and the new zamindars and destroyed the account books and records of debts of the moneylenders They also attacked the law courts, revenue offices, police stations and revenue records Even where the people did not revolt, they showed strong sympathy for the rebels They were happy at the success of the rebels and organised social boycott of those sepoys who remained loyal to the British They showed active hostility to the British forces, refused to give them help or information and in some cases, even misled them with wrong information

The revolt at Kanpur was led by Nana Sahib, the adopted son of Peshwa Bajirao II, Nana Sahib expelled the English from Kanpur with the help of the sepoys and proclaimed himself the Peshwa He also recognised Bahadur Shah as the Emperor of India and himself his Governor The chief burden of fighting on behalf of Nana Sahib fell on the shoulders of Tantia

Tope The British garrison at Kanpur surrendered and all of them, except 4 persons, were killed Later on, Kanpur was captured by Campbell

The revolt at Lucknow was led by the Begum of Avadh, who declared her son Birjis Kader as the Nawab of Avadh Helped by the sepoys at Lucknow and the zamindars and peasants of Avadh, the Begum organised an all-out attack on the British Sir Henry Lawrence was killed during the course of the siege of the Residency Later on, General Outram and Havelock forced their way into the Residency They were also besieged but were relieved later on

Rani Lakshmibai of jhansi joined the rebels when tile British refused to acknowledge her right to adopt a heir to the Gaddi of Jhansi and threatened to treat her as an instigator of the rebellion of the sepoys at jhansi She vacillated for some time but later on decided to throw in her lot with the rebels She was driven out of Jhansi by the British forces after a fierce battle in which "even women were seen working the batteries and distributing ammunition " She captured Gwalior with the help of Tantia Tope and her trusted Afghan guards Maharaja Sindhia tried to fight against Rani of Jhansi but most of his troops deserted to her and he took refuge at Agra Rani Jhansi died fighting on 17 June, 1858

Kunwar Singh was the chief organiser of the revolt in Bihar, Although he was nearly 80 years of age at $hat time, he was perhaps the most outstanding military leader and strategist of the revolt He fought the British in Bihar and also campaigned in Avadh and Central India, He defeated the British forces near Arrah where he sustained a fatal wound while fighting, He died on 27 April 1858,

Causes of failure of the mutiny

Many causes were responsible for the failure of the revolt of 1857 In the first place, the mutiny was localised There were many parts of India which were not affected by it at all, particularly, the territory south of the river Narbada remained undisturbed, Sindh was quiet Rajputana was loyal Dost Mohammed remained friendly Central and Easter Bengal remained undisturbed Instead of joining the rebels, the Gurkhas of Nepal rendered meritorious services to the British In spite of the fact that the Punjab had been conquered from the Sikhs only 8 years before The revolt, it remained quiet If the people of the Punjab bad joined the ,rebels, tile story of the revolt would have been absolutely different As a matter of fact, the rule of Sir John Lawrence was not very popular and he himself was not certain about the loyalty of the people Anyhow, the loyalty of the Punjabis made the matter easier for the British Not only they remained loyal themselves, they helped the government in disarming and guarding the Bengal troops at Lahore, Peshawar and Multan Those regiments which mutinied were, put down It was the tranquillity of the province that enabled the provincial government to send reinforcements to Delhi So great was the loyalty of the Punjab, that practically all the troops left the Punjab and even then there was no trouble It is contended that if the revolt bad not been localised and had spread in every nook and corner of the country, the fate of the country would have been different

The chief Sirhind rendered excellent help to the British Sir Dinkar and Salar Jung were responsible for maintaining peace in the territories and the Nizam Without their devotion and sincerity, things might

have been too hard for the British It is contended that the deserves to be mentioned for ever by Englishmen with gratitude and admiration

The rebels failed on account of the lack of leadership among them It is true that the Rani of Jhansi was a capable woman, but she was neither the head of all the forces nor an experienced general General Bakht Khan was a brilliant man, but he was not in-charge of the whole show The rebels worked without any common plan They were short of modem weapons and other materials of war, They fought with ancient weapons such as pikes and swords They were brave and selfless but they were ill-disciplined Sometimes they behaved more like a riotous mob than a disciplined army There was no centralised leadership, There was no coordination among them in various parts of the country The rebels were joined together with a common feeling of hatred against foreigners and when British power was overthrown from any area, they did not know what sort of power to create in its place, They were suspicious and jealous of one another and often indulged in suicidal quarrels The Begum of Avadh quarrelled with Maulavi Ahmedullah and the Mughal princes with the sepoy generals Azimullah asked Nana Sahib not, to visit Delhi lest he be overshadowed by Bahadur Shah, Selfishness of the leaders sapped the strength of the revolt and prevented its consolidation, The peasantry having destroyed the revenue records and the account books of the moneylenders, became passive and did not know what to do next, The British succeeded in crushing the leaders of the revolt one by one

The rebels had no forward-looking programme to be implementce, after the capture of power The absence of a modern and progressive programme

enabled the reactionary princes and Zamindars to seize the levers of power of the movement, It is these people who had already been defeated by the British and there was nothing new in them which could help them to succeed against the British

The moneylenders were the targets of the attacks by the villagers, They were naturally hostile to the revolt The merchants also gradually became unfriendly towards the rebels, who were compelled to impose heavy taxes on them in order to finance the war or to seize their stocks of foodstuffs, to feed the army The merchants often concealed their wealth and goods and refused to give free supply to the rebels The Zamindars of Bengal remained loyal to the British The hostility of Bihar peasants towards the Zamindars frightened the Bengal Zamindars The big merchants of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras supported the British because their main profits came from foreign trade and economic connections with the British merchants

The educated Indians also did am support the revolt They stood for ending the backwardness of their country and they believed that the British government in India was destroying the feudal forces in the country and bringing in a new era of progress in the country Their view was that the rebels of 1857 stood for the old order along with its superstitions

The British had great personalities in Sir John Lawrence, Outram, Havelock, Nicholson, Edwardes, Neil, etc , who controlled the situation from the beginning to tire end and the Indians were no match for them

The personal character of the Bengal troops was also responsible for the failure of the revolt They were arrogant arid were hated in every part of India to

which they were sent At many places, the rebels were crushed by the people themselves

The year 1857 was favourable to the British in many ways The Crimean War was over in 1856 The Chinese War was just over The British armies were free to throw their weight against the mutineers Russia was defeated in the Crimean War and there was no danger from that quarter Internationally, the Indian rebels were isolated

As the British had control over the seas, they were in a position to pour men and materials into India with practically no difficulty A large number of troops were at once sent to India The Indians fighting with primitive weapons were no match for the British with the Enfield rifles

The only hope of success for the rebels was to have quick victories Time factor was against them, It could be taken for granted that the English would be able to get reinforcements from outside and when that happened, the revolt collapsed

The rebels appealed to all other sections of society but no appeal was, made to the peasants or tillers of the soil, While all other classes were promised a better deal, the peasants were ignored altogether The inability of rebel leaders to rally the peasants to their side doomed their cause The revolt got its strength from the princes, ruined noblemen and other feudal interests and those forces were incapable of overthrowing the British Government in India

The view of Dr A R Desai is that while England was a capitalist country, India was essentially feudal and the victory of the former was a foregone conclusion To quote him, "A capitalist nation is socially, politically economically and culturally

stronger than a feudal people A capitalist nation has a high sense of patriotism and nationalism since, unlike the feudal people who are physically separated, socially disunited and politically unamalgamated, it is socially, economically and politically high integrated, living under one political regime and single economic system, This is why throughout the whole history of British conquest, we hardly come across Britons who betrayed the interests of Britain in India, in contrast to hundreds of Indians, Princes, Generals and merchants who went over to the British and assisted them to dominate India " R P Dutt says The rising of 1857 was in its essential character and dominant leadership the revolt of the old conservative and feudal forces and dethroned potentates for their rights and privileges which they saw in, process for destruction, The reactionary character of the rising prevented any wide measure of popular support and doomed it to failure "

About the causes of the failure of the revolt of 1857 Dr Tara Chand says that its failure was almost a foregone conclusion It was actuated by pure negations It was not inspired by any positive creative idea It did not entertain either the vision of a higher social order or of a higher political system It was a transient intoxication and not a settled, permanent transformation of the will of the people As it was an almost spontaneous episodic outburst, there was no stable well ordered organisation behind the movement as a whole It lacked plan, programme and funds The only thing which united the rebels was the desire to eliminate foreign rule and that was equated with the physical destruction of the foreign personnel There was no understanding of the character of the political organisation of the enemy, no realisation that the

extermination of the individuals was not tantamount to the break-up of the system It was dimly perceived that Hindu-Muslim co-operation was necessary, but it was not realised that the nation was an organic unity, that no mere temporary co-operation of independent units was enough and that a fusion of communities into a political organism alone could guarantee success against a modern power The cause for which they fought was not unjust, but its ethos was inadequate, There was little discipline among the rebels and their loyalties were fragile Intellectually they were no match for their enemies whose military technique was based upon science, in strategy and tactic,, the British forces were far superior to the Indians and the British Commanders were well-trained men and many of them possessed extensive experience of war These forces worked under the orders of a highly organised Government in India which was backed by ample resources in men and money of the British people and the British Government, So long as the central organs of the Company' administration continued, to function , the loss of peripheral territories not fatal and so long as reinforcements could be supplied from across one seas, the citadel of the British rule in India was safe from the storms that blew all round

Effects of the revolt

The Revolt of 1857 did not leave India unaffected It is contended that "Perhaps a more fortunate occurrence than the Mutiny of 1857 never occurred in India " It swept the Indian sky clear of many clouds, It disbanded a lazy, pampered army which thought that in its 100 years of life, it had done splendid service, It showed to the world that the English possessed courage and national spirit which made light of disaster and which did not care for the heavy odds

As a direct result of the Revolt of 1857, the English East India Company was ended and the Government of India was taken over by the Crown The Board of Control and the Court of Directors were abolished and their place was taken by the Secretary of State for India and the India Council

There was a change in the policy of the Government of India towards the Indian Princes The loyalty of the Rajput, Maratha and Sikh Chiefs and of the Nizam had been of very great value in preventing the spread of the revolt Art attempt was now made to integrate as well as reward them Their territories were guaranteed and some received material recognition for special service The most significant change was psychological They were now regarded as members of an Order and not just' survivals and anachronisms They were an integral part of the Indian Empire and had personal relation with the monarch Men like Lord Mayo and Lytton saw them as props of British Imperialism in India They were to be encouraged to become enlightened despots Lord Lytton even proposed an Indian Peerage for them Queen Victoria declared in her Proclamation of 1858 that the, British Government in future would not annex the Indian States The Indian Princes were assured the right of adoption and succession They were given Sanads and certificates of recognition of their status The Government of India began to rely more and more on the Indian princes on account of the alienation of the feelings of the Indians

There was a change in the land policy of the Government The tactless treatment of the Taluqdars (zamindars) of Avadh had, at one time, confronted the British with a whole province in revolt It was noted that it was the dispossessed landlords in Bihar who

turned the Mutiny into something like an agrarian revolt There was the aristocratic reaction in land policy The extension of the Permanent Settlement of Bengal was seriously considered Short of this, their estates were safeguarded They themslves were cherished with such devices as Honorary Magistrates 'The tendency to come between them and their tenants was checked They were treated as important props to the administration An attempt was made to revise the Punjab Settlement in favour of the dispossessed landlords,

There was a change in the policy of the Government of India to Westernise the Indians The British view that all good things came from the West and more of them the better, received a rude shock, The revolt was considered in one respect as a resurgence of the old order against Western innovations It was now thought that the upper classes must be conciliated as the humbler classes followed them The upper classes were the most Conservative in a conservative country and all interference was given up in the future

There was an extensive reorganisation of the army in India The Bengal Army virtually ceased to exist The separation of the three armies of Bengal, Bombay and Madras was retained because each group had its own tradition and their distinctness had prevented the spread of the Mutiny virus from the Bengal Army to the other armies However, the Bengal Army was completely recast The Company's European troops, 16,000 strong, were paid off or absorbed into the British army The rest of the army was reformed into community regiments, two battalions of which were always bridged with a British battalion The personnel of the army was modified The Brahmin

element from Uttar Pradesh was heavily reduced and its place was taken by Gurkhas, Sikhs, Jats and Rajputs of the Punjab The northern element was later increased with infusions of Pathans and Punjabis at the expense of men from the South The ratio of European to Indian troops in the Bengal Army was increased to parity and nearly I to two for the army as a whole (65,000 to 1,40,000) The artillery of the old army was abolished except for a few muntain batteries Officers continued to be Europeans but more of them were appointed and they lived in far closer touch with their men than before As the cost of an, European soldier was 4 or 5 times than that of a sepoy, the military budget of India swelled as a result of reorganisation Military positions and strategic points were transferred to the European troops Sir Richard Temple wrote thus "At every large military station in the Empire, there are (now) enough Europeans to hold their own ,even in the event of a Mutiny " In the new native army, men of higher caste were excluded The Bengal army virtually became the Punjab army new army was organised an the basis of division and counterpoise Jawaharlal Nehru says that "The policy of balance and counter-poise was deliberately furthered in the Indian army Various groups were so arranged, as to prevent any sentiment of national unity growing amongst them, and tribal and communal loyalties were encouraged Every effort was made to isolate the army from the people and even ordinary newspapers were not allowed to reach the Indian troops All the key positions were kept in the hands of the Englishmen and no Indian could hold the King's Commission No Indian could be employed at the Army Headquarters, except as a petty clerk in the Accounts Department For additional protection, the more effective weapons of warfare were not given

to the Indian forces, they were reserved for the British troops in India These British troops were always kept with the English regiments in all the vital centres of India to serve as 'Internal Security Troops', for suppression of disorder and to overawe the people," The exclusion of the Indians from the artillery minimised the dangers The British view was that a artillery manned exclusively by Europeans is to India what a Channa Fleet is to England As long as it is strong, we are all but secure against any attempts at disturbance, It will keep all in check, Sikhs included' The attitude of the Government of India towards the Indian soldiers is clear from the following passage in a Despatch to the Secretary of 'State for India in the time of Lord Lawrence while recommending the supply of inferior type of rifles to Indian soldiers "After the event, of 1857, which it is impossible to forget and which it would be unwise to ignore, blind and implicit confidence in a mercenary native army liable to he swept by a sudden, almost unaccountable impulses and prejudices, is out of the question and the show or prevalence of such a feeling would more probably he viewed as symptom of weaknesses than as a proof of trust"

The Revolt of 1857 created a lot of bitterness between the Indians and the Englishmen Garratt says, that "the English killed their prisoners without trial and in a manner held by all Indians to be the height of barbarity—sewing Mohammedans in pig skins, smearing them with pork fat before execution and burning their bodies and forcing Hindus to defile themselves They also massacred thousands of civilian population not only in Delhi, but also in the country, Certain guilty villages were marked out for destruction and all tire men inhabiting them were slaughtered and

the indiscriminate burning of their inhabitants occurred wherever our armies moved "

The revolt resulted in the tightening of the control of India from London The English foreign policy was linked up with European politics The Centre of interest in India shifted from external policy to the internal development

Another effect of the mutiny was that the Muslim renaissance which had been growing in Delhi before the Mutiny got an irreparable setback The cultural blossoms were blighted C F Andrews says, "It is not difficult to trace the fatal havoc to budding spiritual life which one year of Mutiny wrought, Decay immediately overtook the revival of learning in Delhi from which it never recovered " Calcutta, the centre of Hindu renaissance escaped the horrors of Mutiny and was saved

When the rebellion started, both the Hindus and Muslims took part in it in large numbers, However, the Muslims were more violently anti-British than the Hindus and the British feared the Muslims more than the Hindus The result was that the hand of repression fell more heavily on the ,Muslims than on the Hindus Many of the leading Muslims were hanged or exiled, e g, Nawab Sahibs of Jhajjar, Ballabhgarh, Faruknagar and Fai akabad 24 Shahzadas were hanged in Delhi on 18 November, 1857 'A me, Muslim quarters were everywhere the target Muslim property was widely confiscated The result of all this was that the Muslims came have a grievance against the Hindus The difference between the two began to develop and they drifted away from each other The problem of Hindu-Muslim unity became impossible to tackle and ultimately that led to the Partition of India in 1947

57

Swadeshi Movement in Bengal

Down to July 1905, the partition plan had been opposed through an intensive use of the conventional 'Moderate' methods of press campaigns, numerous meetings and petitions, and big conferences at the Calcutta Town Hall in March 1904 and January 1905 attended by many district delegates The evident and total failure of such techniques led to a search for new forms—boycott of British goods (first suggested by Krishnakumar Mitra's weekly *Sanjivani* on 13 July 1905, and accepted by the established leaders like Surendranath Banerji after considerable hesitation at the Town Hall meeting of 7 August) and Robindranath's and Remendras under Trivedie's imaginative appeals for *rakhi-bandhan* and *arandhan* Wristlets of coloured thread were exchanged on Partition Day (16 October) as symbol of brotherhood, and the hearth kept unlit as a sign of mourning The British crackdown on student picketers through measures like the Carlyle Circular threatening withdrawal of grants, scholarships and affiliation from nationalist dominated institutions led to a movement for boycott of official educational institutions led to a movement for boycott of official educational institutions and organization of national schools which received a grate fillip from the spectacular donation of Rs one lakh by Subodh Mullik on 9 November Tensions mounted with further measures of repression (the posting of Gurkhas in Barisal, the *lathi*-charge smashing up the provincial

conference there in April 1906, numerous '*Swadeshi*' cases against picketers), and soon internal differences cropped up within the movement in Bengal With some, boycott became the starting-point for the formulation of a whole range of new methods, and the abrogation of the Partition came to be regarded as no more than the 'pettiest and narrowest of all political objects'—a mere stepping-stone in a struggle for '*Swaraj*' or complete independence With others, like Surendranath, boycott was a last desperate effort to get Partition revoked by pulling at the purse-strings of Manchester The established Moderate leaders managed to call off the educational boycott by 16 November 1905, and were soon taking advantage of the appointment of Morley with his great liberal reputation as Secretary of State to get back to the safer shores of 'mendicancy'

Such internal differences evidently had a factional aspect, with individuals or groups more-or-less kept out of nationalist leadership so far (like Motilal Ghosh with his *Amrita Bozar Patrika*, or Bepinchandra Pla, or Aurobindo Ghosh) trying to muscle in on hitherto closed preserves and seeking to break up the 'rings of lawyers' which, Pal complained, had monopolized politics till then in the district towns Yet to present the whole story in terms of a conflict between 'ins' and 'outs' would be to grossly oversimplify things, and rob the *Swadeshi* era in Bengal of its real interest and significance

At a theoretical level, three major trends can be distinguished in the political life of Bengal between 1905 and 1908 apart from the well-established Moderate tradition There was first what may be termed 'constructive *Swadeshi*'—the rejection of futile and self-demeaning 'mendicant' politics in favour of self-help through *Swadeshi* industries, national

schools, ad attempts at village improvement and organization This found expression through the business ventures of Prafullachandra Roy or Nilratan Sircar, Satikschandra Mukherji's journal *Dawn* and his Dawn Society which played a seminal role in the national education movement, and above all in Rabindranath, who in his *Swadeshi Samaj* address (1904) had already sketched out a blue-print for constructive work in villages, through a revival of the traditional Hindu '*samaj*' or community Aswinikumar Dutt's Swadesh Bandhav Samiti in Barisal (Bakargunj) claimed to have settled 523 village disputes through 89 arbitration committees in its first annual report (September 1906), and about a thousand village *samitis* were reported to be functioning in Bengal in a pamphlet dated April 1907 In all this there were clear anticipations of much of the later Gandhian programme of *Swadeshi*, national schools and constructive village-work

Such a perspective of slow and unostentatious development of what Rabindranath called *atmasakti* (self-strengthening) had little appeal to be excited educated young of Bengal, who felt drawn much more to the creed of a more political Extremism Journals like Bepin Pal's *New India*, Aurobindo Ghosh's *Bande Mataram*, Brahmobandhab Upadhyay's *Sandhya* and the *Yugantar* (brought out by a group associated with Barindrakumar Ghosh) from 1906 onwards were calling for a struggle for *Swaraj* In practive, as later events showed, many of the Extremist leaders would agree to settle for less—Tilak in January 1907, for instance, expressed his willingness to take 'half a loaf rather than no bread', though with the intention 'of getting the whole loaf in good time' The more fundamental difference was really therefore over methods, and here the classic statement came from

Aurobindo in a series of articles in *Bande Mataram* in April 1907, later reprinted as *Doctrine of Passive Resistance* Ridiculing the ideal of 'peaceful ashrams and swadeshism and self-help' as inadequate, he visualized a programme of 'organized and relentless boycott' of British goods, officialized education, justice, and executive administration (backed up by the positive development of *swadeshi* industries, national schools, and arbitration courts), and also looked forward to civil disobedience of unjust laws, a 'social boycott' of loyalists, and recourse to armed struggle if British repression went beyond the limits of endurance The *Sandhya* of 21 November 1906 had chalked out a similar perspective 'If the chowkidar, the constable, the deputy and the munsiff and the clerk, not to speak of the sepoy, all resign their respective functions, feringhee rule in the country may come to an end in a moment ' Once again we have practically the entire future political programme of Gandhism, minus the dogma of non-violence, and—significantly enough—no tax or no-rent calls, which Aurobindo explicitly ruled out in his April 1907 articles as going against a *zamindar* community in Bengal which was assumed to be basically patriotic

In practice, Bengal Extremism wasted a lot of energies in purely verbal or literary violence and in-fighting over the Congress organization, though it die contribute (along with others), as well shall see, to building up an impressive chain of district organizations or *samitis* and in providing some novel political leadership to labour unrest Already by 1907, however, the mass-movement perspective was being challenged from within its own ranks by calls for elite-action terrorism 'And what is the number of English officials in each district? With a firm resolve you can bring English rule to an end in a single day If we sit idles,

and hesitate to rise till the whole population are [sic] goaded to desperation, then we shall continue idle till the end of time Without blood, O Patriots! will the country awake?"

Cutting across the debate over political methods or goals was another controversy over cultural ideals, between modernistic and Hindu-revivalist trends The *Swadeshi* mood in general was closely associated with attempts to combine politics with religious revivalism, which was repeatedly used as a morale-booster for activists and a principal instrument of mass contact Thus Surendranath claimed to have been the first to use the method of *Swadeshi* vows in temples, national education plans often had a strong revivalist content, boycott was sought to be enforced through traditional caste sanctions, Extremist leaders insisted in May 1906 on a Shivaji *utsava* complete with image-worship, and radical politics and aggressive Hinduism often got inextricably combined in the pages of *Bande Mataram, Sandhya* or *Yugantar* Yet there were dissidents in every group Brahmo-edited journals like *Sanjivani* or *Prabasi* were critical of obscurantism, and bluntly declared that 'the patriotism which glorifies our past as ideal and beyond improvement and which rejects the needs for further progress is a disease' (Sibnath Sastri in *Prabasi*, Jaistha 1313/1906) Krishnakumar Mitra's Anti-Circular Society boycotted the Shivaji *utsava* out of consideration for its 'numerous Mahomedan workers and sympathisers', and even some revolutionary terrorist like Hemchandra Kanungo later bitterly denounced the prevalent religiosity Perhaps most interesting of al is the evolution of Rabindranath—considerably swayed by revivalism for some years, but then breaking away sharply in mid-1907 under the impact of communal riots and vividly expressing the tensions and

ambiguities of the age through two of his finest novels, *Gora* and *Ghare-Baire*

The anticipations of Gandhian constructive work and mass *satyagraha* proved extremely short-lived, and by the end of 1908 Bengal politics was once again confined to the opposite, but not unrelated, poles of Moderate 'mendicancy' and individual 'terrorism' The central historical problem of the period is why this became so—since and explanation in terms of the external factor of British repression alone is hardly sufficient Despite much talk in nationalist circles about police 'atrocities' and *Swadeshi* 'martyrs', the total number of prosecutions directed against the open movement down to 1909 was only 10 in Bengal and 105 in the new province, the accused getting sentences from two weeks to a year The only two cases of firing in this period had as the targets Jamalpur rail workers on strike (August 1906) and Muslim rioters in Sherpur (September 1907), not *Swadeshi* demonstrators What is needed therefore is a closer look at the strength and internal limitations of the principal components of the 1905-08 movement boycott and *Swadeshi*, national education, labour unions, *samitis* and mass contact methods

Boycott and Swadeshi

The history of boycott and *Swadeshi* in Bengal vividly illustrate the limits of an intelligentsia movement with broadly bourgeois aspirations but without as yet real bourgeois support Boycott did achieve some initial success—thus the Calcutta Collector of Customs in September 1906 noted a 22% fall in the quantity of imported cotton piecegoods, 44% in cotton twist and yarn, 11% in salt, 55% in cigarettes and 68% in boots and shoes in the previous month as compared to August 1905 The decline in Manchester cloth sales

had a lot to do with a quarrel over trade terms between Calcutta Marwari dealers and British manufacturers, resulting in a spectacular drop in 'Lucky Day' contracts for the following year in October 1905 from 32,000 packages too only 2500 Once this dispute was settled, however, the Marwaris went back to their compradore business, while in the districts merchants of the Shaha community often became the principal targets of social boycott due to their refusal to sub-ordinate profits to patriotism Bombay mill-owners on their part seized the opportunity to hike up prices, despite numerous appeals from Bengal Bombay could not yet manufacture the finer types of yarn and cloth being imported from Manchester, and therefore was not too enthusiastic about boycott It is significant also that the sharpest decline was in commodities like shoes and cigarettes, where, as the Collector of Customs pointed out, the demand was mainly from 'Indian gentlemen of the middle class, such as clerks, pleaders etc '

The *Swadeshi* mood did bring about a significant revival in handloom, silk-weaving, and some other traditional artisan crafts—a point emphasized by two official industrial surveys in 1908 There was also a related, near-Gandhian, intellectual trend glorifying handicrafts as the Indian or Oriental way to avoid the evils of largescale industry Satischandra Mukherji in 1900, for instance, quoted Engels to prove the horrors of industrial revolution, and wanted big factories only where absolutely indispensable—preferring wherever possible small-scale 'individual family organization' explicitly run on a caste basis Such theoretical departures (often associated with revivalism) from Moderate economics did not prevent, however, a number of attempts to promote modern industries An association had been set up in March 1904 by

Jogendrachandra Ghosh to raise funds for sending students abroad (usually to Japan) to get technical training The Banga Lakhsmi Cotton Mills was launched with much fanfare in August 1906 with equipment bought from an existing Serampore plant, and there were some fairly successful ventures in porcelain (the Calcutta Pottery Works of 1906), chrome tanning, soap, matches and cigarettes The patrons and entrepreneurs included a few big *zamindars* (like Manindra Nandi of Kasimbazar) but otherwise came mainly from the professional intelligentsia Lack of capital thus became the crucial limiting factor, as the established Indian business community, in the words of a leading Calcutta merchant as quoted in an official report, felt 'that it is much easier to make money by an agency in imported goods than by investment in industrial enterprise' One *Swadeshi* pamphleteer, Kalisankar Sukul in 1906, did argue that efforts should be concentrated first on distribution channels rather than starting one or two mills, slowly building up through trade, a new type of business class since the old was essentially unpatriotic—but his views found few takers *Swadeshi* thus could never seriously threaten the British stranglehold over the crucial sectors of Bengal's economy

National education

As in other fields, a considerable variety may be noticed within the national education efforts in *Swadeshi* Bengal, ranging from pleas for more technical training, through advocacy of the vernacular medium (urged most powerfully by Rabindranath), to Tagore's Santiniketan and Satis Mukherji's somewhat eclectic Dawn Society plans o combine the traditional and the modern in a scheme for 'higher culture' for selected youth National education with its negligible job prospects failed to attract, however, the bulk of the

student community What survived after a couple of years was the Bengal National College (planned initially as a parallel university under the National Council of Education set up in March 1906, but quite falling to get any colleges affiliated to it), a Bengal Technical Institute set up by a breakaway group with closer Moderate links, and perhaps potentially the most significant—about a dozen national schools in West Bengal and Bihar and a considerably larger number in East Bengal districts It was the latter development which for a brief while alarmed the authorities—the attempt 'to extend these schools to the villages and get hold of primary education' involving schools in Mymensingh, Faridpur and Bakarganj which occasionally had large numbers of Muslim and low-caste Namasudra pupils The Calcutta-based National Council, however, largely ignored such district or village schools (it was spending only Rs 12,000 on them out of a total budget of Rs 125,000 in 1908), and they shared in the general decline of mass-oriented movements What survived in the end in East Bengal were certain schools which became virtually recruiting centres for revolutionaries, of which Sonarang National School near Dacca was the most famous

Labour unrest

An official survey entitled *Administration of Bengal under Andrew Fraser* 1903-08 described 'industrial unrest' as 'a marked feature of the quinquennium', and noted the role of 'professional agitators' as quite a novel phenomenon Strikes in white-controlled enterprises (as most industrial units were in Bengal), sparked off by rising prices and also quite often by racial insults, now obtained from nationalist quarters considerable newspaper sympathy, occasional financial help, and even aid in setting up trade unions Four

men in particular deserve to be remembered as pioneer labour-leaders the barristers Aswinicoomar Banerji, Prabhatkusum Roychaudhuri, Athanasius Apurbakumar Ghosh, and Premtosh Bose the proprietor of a small press in north Calcutta In September 1905, the entire *Swadeshi* public hailed a walk-out of 247 Bengali clerks of Burn Company in Howrah in protest against new work-regulation felt to be derogatory The next month saw a tram strike in Calcutta, settled through the efforts of Banerji and Ghosh, and reports of 16 October convey a *bandh*-like flavour, with most offices closed down, carters off the roads, and strikes in some jute mills and railway workshops The first real labour union followed soon after the Printers Union, set up on 21 October in the midst of a bitter strike in government presses In July 1906, a strike of clerks on the East Indian Railway led to the formation of a Railwaymen's Union and efforts to draw in the coolies through meetings at Asansol, Ranigunj and Jamalpur addressed by *Swadeshi* political leaders like Bepin Pal, Shyamsundar Chakrabarti and Llakat Husain apart from A C Banerji, A K Ghosh and Premtosh Bose There was one massive proletarian intervention, at the Jamalpur workshop on 27 August which led to firing The strike, however, failed, and the union collapsed with it Jute strikes were also frequent between 1905 and 1908, affecting at various times 18 out of 37 mills The private papers of A C Banerji show his organizing an Indian Millhands' Union at Budge Budge in August 1906 They also reveal what was to be a recurrent problem for the Indian labour movement—contacts with workers were inevitably often through the 'babus' (clerks) and *sardars*, yet a memorial signed by 28 labourers of the Budge Budge Jute Mills reveal such people as petty exploiters charging bribes and *puja* fees

The labour movement at its height appeared formidable enough or the Anglo-Indian journal *Pioneer* on 27 August 1906 to thunder that the politician might 'agitate about the against the partition to his hearts' content, but when he threatens the welfare of the whole province by sowing discontent among the ignorant labourers it is time that a government of law and order asserted itself' Some Extremist journals occasionally speculated about the great potentialities of the 'Russian method' of the political general strike 'The workers of Russia today are teaching the world the methods of effective protest in times of repression—will not Indian workers learn from them?' (*Nabasakti*, 14 September 1907, after Pla had been jailed) As in some much else, however, all this remained no more than interesting anticipation There were no really political strikes (unlike in Bombay during Tilak's trial in 1908), plantation and mine labour remained unaffected, *Swadeshi* contacts were developed in the main only with clerks or at best Bengali jute workers (hence the importance of mills like Fort Gloster or Budge Budge, where the up-country element was less prominent than elsewhere)—and nationalist interest in labour slumped suddenly and totally after the summer of 1908, and would not be renewed before 1919-22

Samitis

The sudden emergence of the *samitis* or 'national volunteer' movement was one of the major achievements of the *Swadeshi* age Hindsight has too often led to an equation of such organizations with incipient terrorist societies Actually, down to the summer of 1908, most *samitis* were quite open bodies engaged in a variety of activities physical and moral training of members, social work during famines, epidemics or religious festivals, preaching the

Swadeshi message through multifarious forms, organizing crafts, schools, arbitration courts and village societies, and implementing the techniques of passive resistance. Apart from Calcutta, with 19 *samitis* reported by the police in 1907, the main strength of the movement was in East Bengal. This included a central bloc consisting of Bakargunj, Faridpur, Dacca and Mymensingh districts (where originated the five principal *samitis* which were to be banned in January 1909—Swadesh Bandhav, Brati, Dacca Anushilan, Suhrid, Sadhana), strong organizations in Rangpur, Tippera, Sylhet and the apart of the old province lying to the east of the Hooghly river, and some societies in all districts except Sibsagar, Goalpara and Garo hills. A police report of June 1907 gave an estimate of 8485 volunteers for East Bengal; Bakargunk and Dacca topped the list with more than 2600 each. As in other things, there was a lot of variety within the samiti movement. Thus the Calcutta-based Anti-Circular Society stood out due to its secularism (it was the only *samiti* with important Muslim associates, like Liakat Husain, Abul Hossain, Dedar Bux, and Abdul Gafur). The Brisal Swadesh Bandhav did acquire something like a genuine mass base—175 village branches were reported in 1909, and through sustained humanitarian work (as during a near-famine in 1906) its leader Aswinikumar Dutt acquired remarkable popularity among the peasants of his district, Muslims as well as Hindus. The Dacca Anushilan founded by Pulin Das in sharp contrast concentrated from the beginning on secret training of cadres through physical culture and a paraphernalia of initiation vows steeped in Hinduism—things conspicuously all but absent in the much loose but mass-oriented structure of Swadesh Bandhav. Still, down to 1908 efforts at mass contact formed the principal staple of the activities of the bulk

of the *samitis*, and this again took n a variety of, at times, extremely imaginative forms not only a multitude of journals, pamphlets and speeches (all increasingly in the vernacular) but a flood of patriotic songs, plays and use of folk media like *jatras* (particularly those of Mukunda Das in Bakargunj), the organization of festivals, and the cultivation of a traditionalist religious idiom Increasingly Hinduism was sought to be used as the principal bridge to the masses, appealing both to the imagination as well as to fear (e g , the use of caste sanctions in the social boycott of loyalists)

Yet during 1908-009, in face of the very first round of repression, the open *samiti* either disappeared (as with the Swadesh Bandhav), or became a terroristic secret society, the Dacca model driving out the Barisal Even Aswinikumar Dutta's organization had not really developed a peasant membership (as distinct from some ill-comprehending attendance at meetings and respect for a benevolent babu)—the village societies invariably consisted 'of the bhadralok of the village', and it is significant that at Sarupkhati (in Bakargunj district), for instance, 'nearly half the volunteers (were) persons with a tenure-holding interest in the land' An ominously large number of *Swadeshi* cases involved disputes between *zamindari* officials and Muslim vendors, landlord closing of village markets became a principle boycott method, and social boycott often took the form of pressurizing of tenants or sharecroppers by *zamindars* or tenure-holders Rabindranath's *Ghare-Baire* would later vividly portray the oppressive *zamindar* turned *Swadeshi* hero in Harish Kundu, and that this was not sheet invention is indicated by a November 1907 case in Tangail (Mymensingh district) where a Muslim sharecropper charged his Hindu landlord of having

burnt his Manchester cloth in order to terrorize his into relinquishing his lease

Hindu-Muslim relations

The situation thus was almost tailor-made for British divide-and-rule methods In October 1907, *Swadeshi* sympathizers in north Calcutta found themselves being beaten up by police backed up by some elements drawn from the urban poor, described repeatedly in the non-official enquiry report on the disturbances as 'ruffians and low class people, such as dhangars, mehters, sweepers etc ' But the really serous development was the raid growth of Muslim separatism Despite eloquent pleas for communal unity, some memorable scenes of fraternization (like the 10,000-strong joint student procession in Calcutta on 23 September 1905), and the presence of an extremely active and sincere group of *Swadeshi* Muslim agitators (men like Ghaznavi, Rasul, Din Mahomed, Dedar Bux, Moniruzzaman, Ismail Hussain Siraji, Abul Husain, Abdul Gafur, and Liakat Husain—some of whom figured in the very first list of proposed prosecutions for sedition in May 1907), the British propaganda that the new province would mean more jobs for Muslims did achieve considerable success in swaying upper and middle class Muslims against the *Swadeshi* movement The elite-politics of the Salimulla group and the Muslim League (founded at Dacca in October 1906) will be considered later, much more relevant in the present context is the rash of communal riots in East Bengal iswargunj in Mymensingh district in May 1906, Comilla (March 1907), jamalpur, Dewangunj and Bakshigunj, all again in Mymensingh, in April-may 1907 'Ordinary Muhammadans of the lower class in the bazaar' were prominent in the riot in Comilla town, while a strong agratina note pervaded the Mymensingh disturbances

The targets were Hindu *zamindars* and *mahajans*, some of whom had recently started levying an *Iswar britti* for maintaining Hindu images Debt-bonds were torn at many places, and at times the riots took on the colour of a general 'plunder of the rich by the poor' with even Hindu cultivators joining in at places *Maulvis* are said to have spread rumours that the British were handing over charge to Nawab Salimulla of Dacca, who was pained in the rather unlikely colours of a messiah in the communal leaflet *Nawab Sahaber Subichar* Such religious leaders often had connections with emerging rich peasant-elements made relatively prosperous by jute, and Muslim propaganda literature like the *Red pamphlet* (1907) or the later *Krishakbandhu* (1910) visualized a kind of *kulak* or capitalist farmer development side by side with identifying the *zamindar-mahajan* exploiter with the Hindu

In a series of remarkably perceptive articles written in 1907-08, as well as in his presidential address to the Pabna Provincial Conference (February 1908), Rabindranath pointed out that simply blaming the British for the riots was quite and inadequate response 'Satan cannot enter till he finds a flaw', and the crucial problem was that 'a great ocean separates us educated few from millions in our country' Till that gulf was bridged, no short-cuts like verbal extremism or terrorist action were likely to succeed Tagore's alternative, however—patient unostentatious constructive work in villages in which he hoped *zamindars* would take the lead in a paternalistic fashion (as he was trying to do himself in his own estates)—had little appeal to militant youth increasingly provoked by British repression, nor did he really have any concrete social or economic programme of mass mobilization His, therefore, was increasingly a voice crying in the

wilderness as recognized implicitly in *Ghare-Baire*, whose noble but quite ineffective and isolated hero Nikhilesh stands in significant contrast to the optimistic ending of his earlier novel *Gora*

To the vast majority of nationalists, the Muslim rioters were no more than hired agents of the British, the equivalent, as the *bande Mataram* put it, of the Russian counter-revolutionary Black Hundreds Volunteer organization in fact was greatly stimulated by the 1907 riots, and Extremist propaganda took on aggressive Hindu colours and simultaneously veered towards terrorism—an almost inevitable development, as 'revolution' with the vast masses inert or hostile could mean in practice only action by an elite

The shift to terrorism

The first revolutionary groups had been started round about 1902 in Midnapur (by Jnaniendranath Basu) and Calcutta (the Anushilan Samiti, founded by Promotha Mitter and Aurobindo's emissaries from Baroda, Jatindranath Banerji and Barindrakumar Ghosh), but their activities had been confined initially o physical and moral training of members and were not particularly significant till 1907 or 1908 An inner circle within the Calcutta Anushilanunder Barindrakumar Ghosh and Bhupendranath Dutta (with the behind-the-scenes advice of Aurobindo) started the *Yugantar* weekly in April 1906 and attempted one or two abortive 'actions' in the summer of the same year (like a plan to kill the very unpopular East Bengal Lt Governor Fuller which misfired) hemchandra Kanungo, probably the most remarkable figure among this first revolutionary generation, then went abroad to get military (and same political) training, which he ultimately obtained from a Russian emigre in Paris After Kanungo's return in January

1908, a combined religious school and bomb factory was set up at a garden house in the Maniktala suburb of Calcutta Gross carelessness on the part of the leadership (and particularly of Barindrakumar Ghose) however, led to the arrest of the whole group including Aurobindo within hours of the Kennedy murders (30 April 1908), by Kshudiram Basu and Prafulla Chaki—the target, a particularly sadistic white magistrate named Kingsford, escaping unscathed Terrorism of a more efficient variety was meanwhile developing in East Bengal, spearheaded by the much more tightly organized Dacca Anushilan of Pulin Das, with the Barrah dacoity (2 June 1908) as its first major venture

Apart from a wealth of patriotic songs and other considerable cultural achievements (among which may be mentioned a new interest in regional and local history and folk traditions, the scientific work of J C Bose and P C Ray, and the Calcutta school of painting founded by Abanindranth Tagore, revolutionary terrorism was to constitute in the end the most substantial legacy of *Swadeshi* Bengal, casting a spell on the minds of radical educated youth for at least a generation or more The 'revolutionary' movement took the forms of assassinations of oppressive officials of traitors, *Swadeshi* dacoities to raise funds, or at best military conspiracies with expectations of help from foreign enemies of Britain It never, despite occasional subjective aspirations, rose to the level of urban mass uprisings or guerrilla bases in the countryside The term 'terrorism' hence remains not inappropriate

Elite 'revolution' did make substantial contributions to the national struggle The British were often badly frightened, rare examples were set of death-defying heroism in the cause of complete independence (a goal which the Congress as a whole

would formally accept only in 1930) and world-wide contacts were sought in quests for shelter and arms, leading, as well shall see, to important ideological consequences Hemchandra Kanungo, to cite the earliest example, came back from Paris as an atheist with some interest in Marxism Terrorist heroism evoked tremendous admiration from very wide circles of educated Indians, and sometimes from others, too—a street-beggar's lament for Kshudiram, for instance, could still be heard in Bengal decades after his execution Yet British administration was never in serious danger of collapsing, and the admiration felt was usually no more than a vicarious satisfaction at the self-sacrifice of others The intense religiosity of most of the early secret societies (a note which however was to partly disappear over time) helped to keep Muslims aloof or hostile The emphasis on religion had other negative aspects, too, as Hemchandra later pointed out The much-quoted *Gita* doctrine of *Nishkama karma* stimulated a rather quixotic heroism, a cult of martyrdom for its own sake in place of effective programmes 'The Mother asks us for no schemes, no plans, no methods She herself will provide the schemes, the plans, the methods ' (Aurobindo in April 1908) And religion could also become a royal road for an honourable retreat, as when Aurobindo departed for Pondicherry, of Jatindranath Bando-padhyay ended his days as a Ramakrishna Mission swamiji

Above all, elite actionpostponed efforts to draw the masses into active political struggle, which in turn would have involved conscious efforts to link up national with social-economic issues through more radical programmes The social limitations of Bengal revolutionary terrorism remain obvious in a 1918 official list of 186 killed or convicted revolutionaries,

no less than 165 came from the three upper cases, Brahman, Kayastha, and Vaidya

Extremism in other provinces

So far we have been concentrating on Bengal alone, it is time now to broaden our focus, and consider to what extend similar trends were emerging in other provinces, and how Extremists faced Moderates at an all-India level

While Curzon's actions, and particularly the Bengal Partition, aroused widespread resentment throughout educated India, the extent and nature of specific responses were naturally determined by regional or local factors In Bihar, Orissa and Assam, for instance, the educated Bengali was becoming increasingly unpopular due to his dominant position in the services and professions 'Counter-elite' movements developed with the spread of education, ultimately demanding separate provinces for Orissa and Bihar Such trends to keep away from a radicalism primarily associated with Bengal and reaching these provinces mainly via the educated Bengali immigrants, though sympathy was often expressed for 'non-political' *Swadeshi* enterprise (by Madhusudan Das's Union Conference, for instance)

Extremism failed to make very Congress political activity had died down after an initial spurt in the ate 1880s Leaders like Madan Mohan Malaviya or Motilal Nehru, Bayly argues in his study of Allahabad, still felt that considerable local gains could be made through a policy of cooperation with a provincial government which under Mac Donnell had begun to lean a little towards the Hindus The Nagri resolution giving Hindi equal status with Urdu in courts, government grants to the Nagri Pracharini Sabha, and a fairly helpful official stance towards proposals for a

Hindu University at Benares, all these kept Malaviya contented The British also seemed quite sympathetic towards non-political *Swadeshi* and particular to demands for protection of U P sugar, and Malaviya and Chintamani were invited to the officially sponsored Industrial Conference at Naini Tal in 1907 Tilak's U P tour in January 1907 did cause a stir among the students, but most influential political leaders kept away Malaviya had already annexed to his brand of politics the emotional forces of Hindi and Hindu revivalism which otherwise might have been used by radicals, and no serious attempt seems to have been made by any intelligentsia group to approach the peasantry till about 1917 Extremism in fact become a formidable force only in Beneres, with its big Marathi and particularly Bengali communities, and here a revolutionary group speedily emerged, maintaining contacts with Calcutta through Mokhodacharan Samadhyay, and producing an outstanding leader in Sachindranath Sanyal U P student recruits to Extremism like Sunder Lal were also quickly drawn in to terrorism, since prospects for mass politics were evidently poor, and the province (and specifically Beneres) because of its geographical position came to occupy of Bengal and Punjab groups

Another region where Extremism failed was in the Gujarati speaking districts of Bombay Presidency In 1907, Pherozeshah Mehta engineered the transfer of the Congress session from Nagpur to the safe Moderate stronghold of Surat Some of the complexities of the situation are indicated, however, by the interesting case of the brothers Kunvarji and Kalyanji Mehta, rich Gujarat peasants who attended the Surat session, same back enthused by the Lal-Bal-Pal trio, and started organizational work through the Patidar Yuvak Mandal which culminated in the 1920s

in their becoming the 'real makers' of the great Gandhian success-story of Bardoli

Punjab

In the Punjab, with its well-established traditional business communities (mostly belonging to the Khatri, Aggarwal or Arora castes), constructive *Swadeshi* in the fields of banking, insurance and education had roots going back to the 1890s, and there had also been some moves to organize a boycott of foreign cloth after the countervailing excise of 1895 Arya Samajist is connected with the 'College' faction had been prominent in such self-help efforts, along with a rival Brahmo-leaning groups headed by Lala HarKishan Lal which ran the *Tribune* newspaper Among the Aryas (and even to some extent the Punjabi Brahmos), constructive *Swadeshi* often got inextricably combined with militant clear, it was the Hindi-Urdu controversy of the 1880s which made Lajpat Rai became 'wedded to the idea of Hindu nationality' The boyhood influence of heavily Islamicized father was obliterated by government school textbooks full of stories of Muslim tyranny, and Lajpat began making pro-Hindi speeches even before learning form of literary expression) Connections of this Punjab group with Congress-often felt to be both too mendicant and too Westernized or secular-were in contrast much more sporadic, as we have already seen

Punjab's swing towards a rather short-lived Extremism between 1904 and 1907 was determined partly, but as usual by no means solely, by factional considerations The Arya group of Lajpat and Hans Raj had quarrelled bitterly with Lala Harikishan Lal over the management of the Punjab National Bank and Bharat Insurances, and they started the *Panjabee* (with its motto of 'self-help at any cost' in October

1904 as a radical challenge to the Tribune Down to late 1906, however, the Punjab variety of Extremism was much milder than that of Bengal, concentrating in practice on constructive work rather than boycott, and often seeking joint platforms with moderate Congressman as well as with a Muslim group headed by Muhammed Shafi and Fazal-i-Husain

What made the Punjab situation very different for a few months in 1907 were a series of provocations from the British The Punjab intelligentsia was infuriated by the prosecution of the Punjabee for writing about racist outrages at a time when violent abuse of Indians in the *pages of the* Civil and Military Gazette *passed unnoticed by officials The trial of the* Punjabee editor led to demonstrations and stray attacks on which in Lahore in February 1907 and again in May Proposals to tighten up the Land Alienation Act irritated urban Hindu commercial and professional groups What really frightened the British, however, were sings of discontent and militancy among the peasantry in certain areas, Sikh and Muslim as well as Hindu, and particularly ominous since Punjab supplied one-third of the man power for the British Indian army In the Chenab canal colony centered around Layllpur which British irrigation blocs to peasant immigrants, ex-soldiers, and sometimes to urban investors (whose estates at times exceeded 2500 acres) The whole area was controlled in a rigidly bureaucratic and dictatorial manner by white Colonization Officers (who imposed heavy fines for violations of their orders), and system was sought to be tightened up further by the Chenab Colonies Bill introduced in October 1906 A protest movement began to be organized from 1903 by Siraj ud-din Ahmad with his journal *Zamindar* (the term in the Punjab context meant peasant proprietor and not landlord), and by

early 1907 the Chenab colonists (who included Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus and were marked at this time by remarkable communal amity) were eagerly looking for a broader political leadership Meanwhile the British added to their own troubles by sharply enhancing in November 1906 the canal water rate in the Bari Doab region (Amritsar, Gurdaspur and Lahore districts, inhabited mainly by a Sikh peasantry) by 25% or sometimes even 50%, and there was a land revenue hike in the Rawalpindi district too The ravages of the plague and the general price rise contributed to widespread discontent, and labour was also becoming restive There were several strikes among revenue clerks, and the sympathy aroused by the North-Western State Railway strike in early 1907 (the N W S R line went across the Chenab colony) evoked particular alarm in the mind of the Punjab Lt Governor Denzil Ibbeston

Though Lajpat was to be deported in May 1907 on charges of instigating the peasants, his personal role as described in his autobiography seems to have been rather limited He went to Layllpur to address meetings of Chenab colonists twice, in February 1907 and again in March during a big cattle fair, but only with considerable hesitation ('I kept putting (it) off', he tells us), and tried to play there a clearly restraining role Much more important really were the activities of Ajit Singh (uncle, incidentally, of Bhagat Singh) who organized the Extremist Anjuman-i-Mohibban-Watan in Lahore with its journal Bharat-Mata-a combination of 'Muhammadan and Hindu names' which alarmed Ibbetson Like many Bengal *Samitis*, Ajit Singh's group would later turn to terrorism, but in 1907 it was rates extremely active in urging nonpayment of revenue and water rates among Chenab colonists and Bari Doab peasants, Ibbetson in his minute of 30 April

1907 urging drastic action described moves towards 'a combination to withhold the payment of Government revenue, water rates and other rates' as 'an inconceivably dangerous suggestion' There were reports of sepoys attending seditious meetings at Ferozepur, and a government move to debar five leading Rawalpindi lawyers from the courts for having sponsored an Ajit Singh meeting led to massive protests in the latter city (including strikes by Muslim and Sikh arsenal and railway engineering workers and attacks on sahib bungalows)

Madras

In Madras Presidency, Extremist ideas acquired considerable influence in two widely-separated areas the Andhra delta region, and Tirunelveli district in the extreme south Washbrook relates this entirely to factional conflicts The dominant 'Milapore' clique headed at this time by V Krishnaswami Iyer was being challenged by a combination of some Egmore politicians and mofussil 'out' groups 'Egmore' was now controlling the influential newspaper Hindu of Madras, and Prakasam and Kirshna Rao had started the radical Kistnapatrika fro Masulipatnam in 1904

Much more alarming immediately from the government point of view were developments in Tirunelveli district centered around Tuticorin port An official report in December 1906 singled out Tirunelveli as the only in Madras from where significant anti-British feelings were being reported G Subramaniya Iyer toured the district several times in 1906 and 1907, the Tuticorin vakil V O Chidambaram Pillai developed into a major Extremist leader, and in October 1906 a Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company was started in Tuticorin to run steamers up to Colombo The bitter hostility towards this *Swadeshi*

venture (backed by Rs six lakhs capital, and indicating therefore considerable participation by local business groups) shown by the British India Steam Navigation Company sharpened anti-foreign feelings in Tuticorin A sharp lurch towards radicalism became apparent from January 1908 with the arrival of Subramania Siva, a plebian agitator from Madura who began addressing almost daily meetings on Tuticorin beach together with Chidambaran Pillai, preaching the message of *Swaraj*, extended boycott, and (if police reports are to be believed) occasionally urging more violent methods By late February they were striking a new note of direct appeal to workers ' If the coolies stood out for extra wages European mills in India would cease to exist' (Siva on 26 February) - and there was even a statement (by the same orator on 23 February) 'that the Russian revolution had benefited the people and that revolutions always brought good to the world' Allegedly as a direct result of such speeches, the workers went on strike at the foreign-owned Coral Cotton Ills, and a 50% rise in wages was obtained in the first week of March British efforts in mid-March to stop meetings and prosecute Siva and Pillai led to closing of shops, protest strikes by municipal and private sweepers and carriage-drivers in Tuticorin, attacks on municipal offices, law courts, and police stations at Tirunelveli, and firing in both towns on 11-13 March 1908 The Calcutta *Bande Mataram* on 13 Mach hailed the Tuticorin events as forging a 'bond between the educated class and the masses, which is the first great step towards swaraj every victory for Indian labour is a victory for the nation ' As in Bengal, however this 'first great step' remained beyond the reach of Extremism, and after the removal of Siva and Pillai Tirunelveli radicals either became inactive or formed a small terrorist group which was responsible for the murder of district magistrate Ashe

in June 1911 The Small group of Tamilian revolutionaries incidentally included a major poet, Subramaniya Bharati, a Tirunelveli Brahman critical of caste who contributed heavily to emerging Tamil Nationalism A political exile in Pondicherry from 1910, he followed a path sharply different from his fellow-emigre V V S Iyer who became a disciple of the Hindu revivalist Savarkar Bharati before his untimely death in 1921 has started writing poems hailing the Russian Revolution of 1917

Maharashtra

Despite a considerable biographical literature on Tilak, generally recognized as the most outstanding Extremist leader, no really detailed account seems to be available as yet (at least in English) on the movement in Maharashtra between 1905 and 1908 The *Swadeshi* mood naturally led to a rapid development of radical journalism, with the *Kesari* reaching a circulation of 20,000 by 1907, and the creed of *Swaraj* and extended boycott or passive resistance was energetically preached by Tilak and his close associates (like Khaparde and Munje) both in Maharashtra and in other provinces Speeches like Tilak's *Tenets of the New aity* (Calcutta, January 1907) remain Extremist classics, together with Pal's Madras lectures and Aurobindo's *Bande Mataram* articles There was a revival of the religion-political festivals already pioneered by Tilak in the 1890s (Ganapati, Shivaji, Ramdas), bonfires of foreign cloth were organized (as at Poona on 8 October 1905), and a Swadeshi Vastu Pracharini Sabha was set up in Bombay city to carry the new message to what was still a Moderate citadel so far as the established political leadership was concerned Bombay industrialists (over whelmingly Parsi or Gujarati there was only one Maharashtrian mill-owner in 1908), as

we have already seen, were at best only lukewarm supporters of *Swadeshi*, and in September 1906, a later police History sheet of Tilak tells us, the Extremist leaders' bid through Dinshaw to persuade mill-owners to sell *dhoties* at more moderate prices was met by the blunt reply 'that they could not be supplied except at market rates' *Swadeshi* enthusiasm for indigenous cloth, however, contributed, first to the super profits made by Bombay and Ahmedabad during 1905-06 (a contemporary estimate calculated the profits made by Bombay mill-owners to have been Rs 3 25 crores in 1906, as compared to a wage-bill of Rs 1 68 crores), and second, in staving off a major slump in 1906-07 when Japanese competition began sharply curtailing the Chinese yarn market The major breakthrough represented by the floating of the Tata Iron and Steel project in August 1907 (the projected share capital of Rs 2 5 crores was subscribed in three weeks, mainly from Bombay) probably also had some connections with the new mood of self-confidence and patriotism generated by political developments

Two major new initiatives are associated with Tilakite activity in Maharashtra and Bombay city in late 1907 and early 1908- mass picketing of liquor shops, and efforts to develop contacts with predominantly Marathi working -class of Bombay The first-which anticipated a major Gandhian technique - had the twin advantage at times to trends towards a 'Sanskritizing' imitation of Brahmanical norms by lower castes The second was easier in Bombay than in Calcutta, as a big part of the factory- workers at the latter place were non-Bengalis-while in Bombay 49 16 per cent of mill-workers in 1911 came from Tilak's home-district of Ratnagiri Some philanthrophic work had been started already among Bombay workers in the 1880s, though the initiative had come at first not

from the predominantly Brahman nationalist intelligentsia but from men like N M Lokhande associated with Phule's anti-Brahman Satyashodhak Samaj movement More important probably was an emerging tradition of militancy - for if Bombay workers had at times plunged into fratricidal communal strife (as in 1893), they had also mounted spontaneous but powerful strikes - in 1892-93 and 1901 against wage-cuts, and again in September - October 1905 against a fantastic 15 to 16 hour working-day which mill-owners were trying to enforce through introduction of electric lights

Nationalist opinion had generally refused to concern itself with labour conditions in Indian-owned- as sharply distinct from foreign - enterprises, and in 1881 the first Factory Act (pushed through by a Lancashire jealous of low wage - costs in Bombay) had been opposed by Ranade's *Quarterly Journal* and Tilak's *Mahratta* with equal vehemence Tilak's activities in 1907-08 do not represent as much of a break here as sometimes imagined, as the speeches he made at labour meetings in December 1907 and June 1908 in the Chinchpoogly industrial area of Bombay were remarkably free of class-war tones The emphasis throughout was on boycott of foreign goods and liquor *Swadeshi* was advocated as through it 'the work in Mills would increase and the employees would be benefited', and the plight of workers was related to deindustrialization forcing people to leave villages Tilak is reported also to have 'advised the millhands, specially the Jobbers and Head Jobbers in fact had enormous influence, since they were the main agents in hiring workers, and tended to belong to the same caste and region as the men the men they engaged Themselves petty exploiters, the Marathi jobbers often had their own grievances about the predominantly

Parasi or white managers and senior foremen Police reports also pointed out that 'every mill has its Brahman clerks, who possess more or less influence amongst the jobbers', ant that such clerical groups were very much under the sway of Extremism Jobbers in fact were to play a crucial role in later Bombay labour organization too - till the Communist - led Girni Kamgar attempted a sharp break in 1928

Yet if the Extremist leadership had obvious limitations, the massive outburst of proletarian anger in Bombay when Tilak was put on Trial in July 1908 (for certain *Kesari* articles on Bengal terrorism) and given six years' transportation remains a major landmark in our history nationalist speeches and leaflets and clerical-jobber manipulation apart, the workers must have come to realize from their own experiences that officials and policemen were their natural enemies, as purely economic strikes sparked off by truly intolerable living and working conditions were crushed time and again through police intervention The police commissioner had personally led a force to smash the Phoenix mill strike, for example, in October 1905 Sporadic strikes, stone-throwing, and clashes with the police began with the opening of Tilak's trial on 13 July, and soon the army was also called out When Tilak was convinced on 22 July, cloth shop employees of the Mulji Jetha Market called for a six-day *hartal* (one for each year of Tilak's imprisonment) - a vow which the Bombay working - class kept to the letter by staging a massive walk-out till 28 July which at its height affected 76 out of 85 textile mills, as well as the railway workshop of Parel (which had witnessed big economic strikes already in May 1907 and January 1908) The police and the army fired repeatedly, and official reports speak of 16 killed and 43 wounded

Tilak's imprisonment was followed by major *mofussil* riot, at the pilgrimage centre of Pandharpur (Sholapur district on 29 July Both participants and organizers are described in the official report as lower caste people - a fact which, like the Bombay strike, consorts oddly with the oft-repeated theory of Extremism in Maharashtra being no more than a Chitpavan conspiracy But as in other provinces, mass contact and participation proved very short-lived What survived of Maharashtra Extremism after the removal of Tilak largely took to the path of individual terror, with the Nasik- based Abhinava Bharat group as the most important This had emerged in 1907 from out of the Mitra founded in 1899 by the Savarkar were used to kill the Nasik district magistrate in December 1909 There was also a similar Nava Bharat group in Gwalior, where the experience of working under Sindhia's autocracy led to a complete break with illusions still often cherished in this period by other Indian revolutionaries and nationalists The Nava Bharat Society proclaimed its goal to be a republic, 'Since all Native princes are mere puppets' Terrorism in Maharashtra, however,, never became anywhere near as formidable as in Bengal, and we hear little more about it after the Nasik and Gwalior conspiracy cases of 1909-10

58

Rise and Growth of Communalism

Tribal outbreaks remained an endemic feature of many parts of India In the Nallamalai hills of Cuddapah and Nellore (present-day South Andhra), for instance, the very primitive food-gathering Chenchu tribe found its traditional rights to forest produce being increasingly restricted by the government from 1898 onwards, though the latter was somewhat inhibited by the fear that pura repression might lead to the 'total destruction by fire of the nallamali forests' The tightening up of restrictions for conservancy and reveny purposes by a Forest Committee in 1913 directly contributed to a powerful `forest satyagraha' in Cuddpah during the Non-Cooperation movement The old `Rampa' country of the Godavari hills also remained restive, with a *fituri* or revolt in 1916 serving as a prelude to the major rebellion under Aluri Sitarama Raju in 1922-24 which will be described in the next chapter In 1910, British troops suppressed a rising in the Jagdalpur region against the Raja of Bastar, though partly provoked by a succession dispute, the main cause was again the recent imposition of forest produce The rebels disrupted communications, attacked police stations and forest outposts, burnt schools, and even tried to beseige Jagdalpur town In the Orissa feudatory state of Daspalla in October 1914, a Khond rebellion which be no sahebs left in the country' and the Khonds would `live under their own rule' The British feared a

general Khond rising which could `set ablaze the whole of the vast inaccessible mountain tracts streching along the Eastern vast inaccessible mountain tracts streching along the Eastern Ghats so far as Kalahandi and Bastar', and so went about burning Khond villages News of the war produced interestingly similar results among the Oraons of Chote Nagpur, the neighbours of the Mundas Here a movement started by jatra Bhagat in 1914 calling for monotheism, abstention from meat, liquor and tribal dances, and a return to shifting cultivation briefly took and tribal radical millenarian colour in the following year as rumours spread of the imminent coming of a saviour variously identified with Birsa or a 'German' or 'Kaiser Baba' Quick repressive action stamped out this militant strand, but a more pacific `Tana Bhagat' movement survived among the Oraons and developed important links with Gandhian nationalism from the 1920s British efforts to recruit tribal labour for menial work on the Western Front led to a Santal rising in Mayurbhanj and a rebellion in Manipur among the Thadoe Kukis in 1917 Guerrilla war went on here for two years, fuelled also by other grievances like *pothang* (tribals being made to carry the baggages of officials without payment) and Government efforts to stop *jhum* (shifting cultivation) Mean while in southern Rajasthan more than a thousand miles away, the Bhils of Banswara, more than a thousand miles away, the Bhils of Banswara, Sunth and Dungarpur states (adjoining Mewar) had been stirred to action by a reform movement under Govind Guru This began as a temperance and purification movement, but in late 1913 develop in to a bid to set up a Bhil raj 4000 Bhils assembled on Mangad hill, and the British were able to disperse them only after considerable resistance in which 12 tribals were killed and 900 taken prisoner

Peasant movements

Mewar was also the scene of a number of important peasant movements By a curious coincidence these began in 1905, at a time when in far-off Bengal patriotic intellectuals like R C Dutt, D L Roy, Rabindranath Tagore and Rabindranath were writing novels, plays, stories and poems extolling the chivalry and heroism of the medieval Tanas of Chitor The latter's modern descendants combined abject servility towards the British with the grossest forms of feudal exploitation of the peasantry At Bijolia, a big mewar-jagir held by a Parmar Rajput, there were 86 different types of ceases on Kisans, ad in 1905 and again in 1913 the latter collectively refused to cultivate lands and tried to emigrate to neighbouring areas The 1913 protest was led by a *sadhu*, Sitaram Das, while in 1915 a new element was introduced by the externment in this region of an ex-revolutionary connected with Sachin Sanyal's group named Bhoop Singh, alias Vijay Singh Pathik Pathik in exile developed in to a peasant leader, and persuaded a state official, Manik Lal verma to jointly lead a no-tax movement against the Udaipur Maharana i 1916 Peasant refusal to contribute to war-loans was another element in the Bijolia movement, which later developed gandhian contacts and continued in to the 1920s Both Pathik and Verma later became important Congress leaders in Rajasthan

Peasant movements contributed directly and very substantially to the birth of Gandhian nationalism in two areas Champaran in north-west Bihar and Kheda in Gujarat While Gandhi's intervention was indispensable in raising the local issue here to the level of all-India politics, there is a ample evidence in both cases of discontent and protest long before the coming of the Mahatma, and of the existence of what Jacques

Pouchepadass in his study of Champaran has called 'upward pressure from the rural masses themselves' There had been sporadic resistance in Champaran since the 1860s to the *tinkathia* system by which European planters holding *thikadari* leases from the big *zamindars* of Ramngar, bettiah, and Madhuban made peasants cultivate indigo on part of their land at unre-munerative prices As indigo declined from about 1900 in face of competition from synthetic dyes, the planters tried to pass the burden on the peasants by charging *sharahbeshi* (rent-enhancement) or *tawan* (lump-sum compensation) in return for releasing them from the obligation to grow indigo Widespread resistance developed in the Motihari-Bettiah region between 1905-08, affecting an area of 400 square miles and involving some violence (the murder of Bloomfield, a factory manager), 57 criminal cases, and 277 sentences The better-off section of the peasantry continued the struggle over the next decade through petitions, cases and contacts with some Bihar Congress leaders and journalists, and it was as a part of this on-going confrontation that Raj Kumar Shukla, a prosperous peasant-cum-petty moneylender, contacted Gandhi at the Lucknow Congress of 1916 At Kheda, too, collective refusals to pay revenue had become increasingly common well before the entry of gandhi An emerging rich peasant stratum, which had benefited in the nineteenth century from expanding markets for tobacco and dairy produce and had started calling themselves Patidars instead of Kanbis, had been struck by plague and famine between 1898 and 1906, and government revenue enhancements added to their burdens At Bardoli in Surat district, the other main centre of Gandhian activity in Gujarat, a certain amount of organization has started developing from 1908, initially on caste lines the patidar Yuvak Mandel, founded by Kunvarji Mehta

Communalism

Lower-class discontent often took on the much less clear-cut, 'sectional' form of different types of communal, caste or regional consciousness At Kamariarchar in the Jamalpur sub-division of Mymensingh, for instance, a praja conference in 1914 formulated a charter of raiyat demands rent-reduction, an end to cesses, relief for indebtedness, the right to plant trees and dig tanks without paying nazar to zamindar's court The conference was organized by an affluent Muslim raiyat, Chaudhuri Khos Mohammed Sarkar, it remained significantly silent about possible grievances of share-croppers, and was attended but a number of Bengal political leaders, all of them Muslim-Fazlul Huq, Akram Khan, Abdul Kasem and others Here was the beginning of a Praja movement which was to play an important part in the Bengal politics of the 1920s and '30s, reflecting agrarian discontent (more precisely perhaps, rich peasant or jotedar demands), but also contributing in the end to Muslim separatism This happened mainly as a result of the mistakes and limitations of the predominantly Hindu Bengal Congress Very little study has been made so far of the roots of such relatively 'popular' As distinct from elite, communalism, whether Muslim or Hindu One would have liked to known much more, for example, about the possible social dimensions of the massive Bihar riots of October 1917, where crowds of up to 50,000 Hindus attacked Muslims in 124 villages in Shahabad, 28 in Gaya and 2 in Patna Though the immediate and ostensible issue was cow-protection, there were widespread rumours that British rule was collapsing, rioting crowds shouted 'Angrej ka raz uth gaya' and 'German ki jay' and the area affected in Shahabad coincided very closely with what had been Kunwar Singh's base in 1857-58 It has also been suggested

that upper-caste landholders were utilizing communalism to regain a local leadership threatened by emerging class tensions Cow-protection propaganda by Sanatan Dharma Sabha and Arya Samajist agitators certainly played an important role in provoking such riots-and it is another interesting index to the volatise nature of early peasant mobilization that a prominent Sanatan Dharma activist in the Allahabad region of U P , Malaviya's protege Inder Narayan Dwivedi, combined religious lectures and the propagation of Hindi with Home Rule politics and the starting of Kisan Sabhas in 1917 In the Calcutta riots of September 1918, studied in some detail by J H Broomfield, Marwari businessmen of Burra Bazar were attacked by their poorer Muslim neighbours The latter had been aroused in part by the pan-Islamic propaganda of some non-Bengali Muslim agitators (Habib Shah, Fazlur Rehman, Kalami) and up-country ulama Both Hindu revivalism and pan-Uslamism could thus oscillate between expression of lower-class discontent, communal frenzy, and anti-imperialist politics

Caste movements

An important feature of the early decades of the twentieth century was the proliferation of caste conferences, associations, and movements Such bodies were organized mainly by fairly small groups of educated men belonging to intermediate or (less often) lower castes Latecomers in the race for professional or service jobs, they found caste a useful rallying-points to attack the lead established by Brahman or other upper-caste elements which usually had also been the first beneficiaries of English education While Cambridge historians not unexpectedly emphasize this factional aspect, sociologists tend to relate case movements to the upward mobility through

'Sanskritization' of particular *jatis* as whole and have sometimes hailed caste associations as a valuable link between 'tradition' and 'modernity' A third kind of approach is that developed by Gail Omvedt in a vary interesting recent study of the non-Brahman movement in Maharashtra this seeks to explain caste-conflicts as a distorted but important expression of socio-economic and class tension, and finds the Sanskritization concept too narrow, since it cannot explain emergence of some radical and popular anti-caste movements like the Satyashodhak Samaj in Mahrashtra or the Self-Respect agitation in Tamilnadu

While caste associations were by no means uncommon in provinces like Bengal (rending to become more prominent after 1908 as the national movement declined), they acquired much greater social and political importance in south India and Maharashtra These were regions marked by a more clear-cut Brahman predominance and greater caste rigidity (in Kerala for instance the lower castes were supposed to pollute not only by touch but by sight) Among the untouchable Nadars of south Tamilnadu, a prosperous group of traders had emerged by the late nineteenth century in the towns of Rambad district which raised community funds for educational and social welfare activities, claimed Kshatriya status, imitated upper-caste customs and manners, and organized a Nadar Mahajan Sangam in 1910 The Sanskritization model seems fairly appropriate here, provided we remember that such upward mobility hardly affected the lowly toddy-tappers of Tirunelvedli who still went on being called by the old caste-name of Shanar at a time when their successful brethren in Ramad had appropriated the more prestigious title of Nadar Politically far more significant was the 'Justice' movement launched in

Madras around 1915-16, by C N Mudaliar, T M Nair and P Tyagaraja Chetti on behalf of intermediate castes (Tamil Vellaias, Mudaliars and Chettiars, above all, but also Telugu Reddis, Kammas and Balija Naidus and Malayali Nairs) which included numerous prosperous land-lords and merchants and therefore felt jealous of Brahmans in the Madras Presidency held 55% of deputy collector and 72 6% of district munsiff posts in 1912 Brahmans at times were also big landowners, particularly in Thanjavur, and upper-caste taboos on agricultural work and professional activities in towns made them usually absentees The predominantly Brahman Home Rule League agitation of Annie Besant aroused fears which British officials, journalists, and businessmen in Madras were quick to exploit T Earle Welby, editor of the Madras Mail and spokesman of British business interests in Madras city, violently attacked Montagu's promise of responsible government ('And England's voice, no more the lion's they knew/Becomes the whisper of this Wandering Jew'-Madras Mail, 19 September 1917) and cultivated the merging Justice Party The latter paraded its royalism in the hope of getting more service jobs and special representation in the new legislatures, and the Non-Brahman Manifesto of 20 December 1916 expressed opposition to any moves to undermine the influence and authority of the British Rulers, who alone are able to hold the scales even between creed and class The alliance was facilitated by the fact that the Justice leaders wee an extremely elitist group heavily dependent on landlord finance But non-Brahman grievances were real enough as shown by the organization in September 1917 of a pro-nationalist Madras Presidency Association which too demanded separate representation-and in the late 1920s a radical and populist anti-Brahman and anti-caste movement would develop in Tamilnadu under

E V Ramaswami Naicker In the princely state of Mysore, a mainly urban Brahman community (3 8% of the total population) held 65% of gazetted posts in 1918, while Vokkaligas and Lingayats constituted the dominant rural groups A Lingayat Education Fund Association and a Vokkaliga Sangha emerged in 1905-06, and in 1917 C R Reddi, a Madras non-Brahman politician teaching in the Mysore Maharaja's College, founded the state's first political organization-the Praja Mithra Mandali-on an anti-Brahman platform These bodies remained urban professional lobbies, however, trying to influence court politics through personal contacts alone

In Travancore state, the tiny elite of Nambudiri Brahmans (less than 1% of the population) living off big tax-free jenmi estates largely kept away from the race for education and jobs Non-Malayali Brahmans (Marathi Desastha or Tamil in origin), however, enjoyed a privileged position in the state administration, holding in 1891 about the same number of posts as the local dominant caste of Nairs, though they wee only 28,000 as against the latter's strength of half a million An unusual feature of Travancore life was the high degree of literacy, brought about by intense missionary activity among Ezhava and other lower castes in this old centre of Christianity, as well as by the efforts to promote education among upper castes under Dewan Madhavan Rao Urban literacy in Travancore in 1901 stood at 36%-a figure higher than Calcutta The Nairs felt excluded by the non-Malayali Brahmans and threatened at the same time by Syrian Christians (a community which included numerous landlords and prosperous traders in north Travancore, and were pioneers in modern journalism) and the beginning of an upthrust among the Ezhavas They had numerous internal problems, too the traditional

unwieldy taravad (matrilineal joint family) of the Nairs was increasingly felt to be unsuited to modern economic conditions, and many taravads held relatively small blocs of land and were hard-hit by rising prices (creating a situation similar to that faced by the gentry-based intelligentsia in many other provinces) Western education also made many Nair social customs appear embarrassing and retrogade, particularly the rule of Nair women having to appear bare-breasted before Nambudiri visitors and to enter into temporary liaisons (sambandham) with them

The cumulative result was the early and almost simultaneous emergence of trends towards social reform, anti-Brahman sentiments, patriotism, and even elements of radicalism Thus Kerala's first modern novel, Chander Menon's Indulekha (1889), attacked Nambudiri social domination and taravad constraints on romantic love, while C V Raman Pillai's historical novel Martanda Varma (1891) attempted an evocation of lost Nair military glory through its hero Ananda Padmanabhan Raman Pillai was the principal organiser of the Malayali Memorial of 1891 attacking Brahman predominance in state jobs-primarily a Nair move, though there were also some Christian and Ezhava signatories While Raman Pillai's group was fairly easily accommodated within the official elite by the late 1890s, a more energetic Nair leadership emerged after 1900 under K Ramakrishna Pillai and Mannath Padmanabha Pillai The latter founded the Nair Service Society in 1914 which still exists, combining caste aspirations with a measure of internal social reform The former edited the Swadeshabhimani from 1906 till 1910, when its attacks on the court and demands for political rights led to Ramakrishna Pillai had some connections with T M Nair's Justice movement, but two years before his untimely death in

1916 he had also published the first biography of Karl Marx in Malayalam

Nor were such multiferous activities a Nair monopoly The awakening of the Ezhavas-traditionally lowly tappers and tenders of the coconut palm, but developing a relatively prosperous segment as the market for coconut products expanded-was centered around the religious leader Sri Narayan Guru (c 1855-1928) and his Aruvipuram temple The Sri Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam was founded in 1902-03 by Sri Narayan Guru, Dr Palpu the first Ezhava graduate, and the great Malayali poet N Kumaran Asan The successful industrial exhibition organized by it at Quilon (January 1905) was followed by a spate of Nair-Ezhava riots The S N D P Yogam under T K Madhavan would establish important links with Gandhian nationalism in the 1920s, while the next generation of Ezhavas would swing decisively over to the Communists A quick transition from social reform, initially sought often through caste associations, to thoroughgoing radicalism was to be in fact a recurrent feature of Kerala life E M S Namboodiripad, too began in the 1920s as a Nambudiri Welfare Association activist

But the most interesting of the caste movements was that of the Satyashodhak Samaj in Maharashtra, which Gail Omvedt's research has revealed to have had two distinct strands The first trend, very similar to the justice movement in Madras, relied largely on the patronage of the Kolhapur ruler Shahu (who had his own quarrels with Brahman courtiers), and concentrated on getting more jobs and political favours for an elite But there was also a much more populist and radical trend, claiming to speak in the name of the 'bahujan samaj' against the shetjis and bhatjis (the Brahman priests, but also the merchants and the rich

in general) Under leaders like Mukundrao Patil, who from 1910 brought out the most important Satyashodhark paper, Din Mitra, from his home village of Taravdi, the Samaj acquired a unique rural base in the Maharashtra Deccan and the Vidarbha-Nagpur region Its populist character is well indicated by the fact that practically the entire Satyashodhak literature is in Marathi and not in English The 1917 annual conference of the Samaj received reports from 49 branches spread over 14 districts, and no less than 30 of these local units were in villages of less than 2000 inhabitants The predominant note at this level was a rejection of caste oppression and hierarchy, and not a Sanskritizing demand for a higher status within the existing structure No doubt the social base was primarily rich-peasant, but in this period there were certain common interests of the entire peasantry against largely upper-caste mahajans and landlords The Satyashodhak message was spread over the countryside through a refashioning of the traditional folk drama or tamasha (a method which the Communists would use again in the 1940s through the Indian People's Theatre Association), and in Satara, where such tamasha groups were most active, a peasant rising would break out in 1919 under local Satyashodhak leaders

Regional sentiments and languages

A final significant feature of our period was the development of regional sentiments along linguistic lines While associated at times with the demand for more jobs for relatively under-privileged groups of educated youth, such feelings often struck much deeper roots, bound up as it was with the emergence of powerful literary and cultural trends in the different regional languages A movement for a separate province began province began developing in the

Andhra districts of Madras from about 1911, fuelled by complaints about Telegu under-representation in the services voiced through journals like the Deshabhimani of Guntur, and inspired also by works like Andhrula Charitramu Annual Andhra Conferences (later called the Andhra Mahasabha) were held from 1913 onwards, whose resolutions demanded also the use of the mother-tongue as medium of instruction The main support came from the Krishna-Godavari delta region, where prosperous urban elements had fairly close connections with a broad middle peasant stratum, creating a wider base for political agitation than anywhere else in Madras Presidency, Nationalist leaders like Konda Venkatappayya and Pattabhi Sitaramayya were active in the Andhra movement, and in 1918 Congress conceded the demand for a separate 'Andhra Circle', within its own organization

While a clear-cut demand for a linguistic state had as yet emerged only in Andhra, the development of regional languages everywhere fostered a variety of sometimes contradictory political trends Malayalam, as we have seen, had become a powerful vehicle for social reform and patriotism 'Thy slavery is thy destiny, O Mother! Thy sons, blinded by caste, clash among themselves/And get killed, what for is freedom then?' wrote the Ezhava poet Kumaran Asan in 1908, and in the 1920s Vallathol's poetry would become a major force in the propagation of Gandhian ideas in Kerala Anti-Brahman movements in Tamilnadu were closely associated with the formation of Tamilnadu were closely associated with the formation of Tamil Sangams in Madura, Madras, and other towns which stimulated interest in ancient Tamil classics and began emphasizing the pre-Sanskrit and non-Aryan 'Dravidian' heritage of the south The Ramayana was turned on its head to glorify Ravana against Rama,

and it is interesting that in Maharashtra, too, Satyashodhak propaganda sometimes included songs mourning the murder of Shambuk the untouchable boy by Rama, and revived an old Maratha peasant cult of Bali-Raj slain by Sugriv and Rama From Phule onwards, who in 1869 had written a ballad hailing Shivaji as 'Shudra king', non-Brahmans also developed an image of Shivaji quite distinct to that propagated by Tilak or Ranade-not the orthodox anti-Muslim hero inspired by Ramdas to protect cows and Brahmans, nor the liberal unifier of high and low castes through bhakti, but a rebel against caste tyranny whose work was ruined by the later Brahmanical Peshwa usurpation

Bengal in 1905 had given the first clear proof of the strength of regional sentiments, and C R Das in his 1917 Bhowanipur address tried to strike that same chord 'The Bengalee might be a Hindu or Musalman or Christian, but he continued to be a Bengalee all the same' More than ever before, Tagore dominated the cultural world of the educated Bengali (particularly after winning the Nobel Prize in 1913), though there was one important innovation which he took up but did not directly initiate the use of the colloquial form in literature, pioneered by the Sabuj Patra literary group in 1915 Politically, however, Rabindranath was out on a limb after 1908 having broken with a nationalism he considered to be over-narrow and revivalist, he was preaching universal humanism which his critics considered somewhat unrealistic

The educated Bengali with his lead in jobs and professions was very unpopular among his neighbours, and in Bihar an agitation by Kayastha professionals under Sachchidananda Sinha for a separate province, complete with university and high court, accompanied and followed the formation of the new province of

Bihar and Orissa in 1911 Over much of northern India, Urdu remained the prime literary language, with a rich tradition best represented in this period by Muhammed Iqbal Hindu revivalist pressures were gradually leading, however, to its decline in the face of Hindi-a gain for populism, to some extent (limited by the fact that literary Hindi was often a highly Sanskritized and artificial construct), but a major blow to communal unity Even Prem Chand began his literary career in Urdu switching over to Hindi after 1915 as he found publication difficult His early writings already struck a distinctive political note Saz-i-Vatan (1908), a collection of short stories, referred in its preface to the partition of Bengal as having 'awakened ideas of revolt in the hearts of the people', and the novel Jalvai-i-Isar (1912) modelled its hero on Vivekananda

Indian society and politics were thus full of complexities and contradictions From 1919 onwards, all-India nationalism under Gandhi would begin to plumb with varying success some of these lower depths

Indian nationalism grew and developed during the second half of the 19th century During this early phase political consciousness among the Muslims lagged behind Nationalists ideas spread among the Hindu and Parsi middle - and lower middle classes But not to an equal extent among the Muslims belonging to the same social classes

Before the British came and gradually set up a foreign government on Indian soil, the Hindu and Muslim masses had on the whole lived together without antipathy or bitterness though there had existed certain religious trends which were the rich and the poor, there were the educated and the

uneducated, there were the rules and the ruled Among these classes and groups there were both Hindus and Muslims This was so during the Mughal period also Even at the time of the 1857 Revolt Hindus and Muslims fought together side by side and their anger was directed against the common enemy, the foreign rules at whose hands all India suffered alike

After the revolt had been put down The British were particularly hard on the Muslims because they had come to the conclusion that the revolt was led by the Muslims and that they were primarily responsible for It It is estimated that in Delhi alone 27,000 Muslims were sentenced to death during the revolt and the short period immediately following For years the Muslims were viewed suspicion by the British

The policy of divide and rule

The strongest arm of the communal triangle was the British rulers They were neither the true friends of the Muslims nor the foes of the Hindus, they were the true friends of British Imperialism acted on the tested and tried maximum of *Divide et Impera* Lord John Elphistone, Governor of Bombay, wrote in a minute, "*Divide et Impera* was the old Roman motto and it should be ours"

With the rise of the nationalist movement, however, the British attitude changed During the 1870's this became more and more noticeable As everything else in British did or attempted to do this change was politically motivated and was the result of the new tactics the British began following to safeguard their own interests As the national movement spread and grew there was the threat that it might unite the people and pose serious problem for the Empire A united people cannot be kept under

subjugation for a long time So in addition to repression and stringent action to control, and, if possible completely dry-up the rising tide of nationalism, the British decided to do all they could to keep the people disunited and quarrelling and competing among themselves They decided to divide the people in the name of their different religious in Indian politics They claimed to be the champions of the Muslim minority and went all out to win over to their side Muslims, zamindars, landlords and the educated middle classes They also tried to introduce and build up other types of divisions They talked of Bengali domination and tried to encourage provincialism They tried to exploit the caste structure of the Indian society and play the non-Brahmins against the Brahmins and the lower castes against the Higher castes By helping the demand to replace Urdu by Hindi in law courts they promoted social and communal bitterness among the Hindus and Muslims of U P and Bihar Thus even legitimate demands of different sections of Indian society and the problems of democratization of the Indian society were exploited to create disharmony among Indians The Indian social situation was quite complex In many internal social and cultural questions rights and complexity was utilized by the alien for their own purposes

Misinterpretation of Indian history

There was one other important reason further growth of a communal way of thinking during the period Indian history had been presented by British historians with a special slant and, later, their Indian counterparts unfortunately followed in their footsteps, and, wrote and taught in such a way as to arouse and foster communal feelings For example, the ancient period was identified as the Hindu period and the medieval periods as the Muslim period During the

medieval period Turk< Afghan and Mughal dynasties ruled Instead of explaining the nature of their rule, they were all bundled together as Muslims and the period itself was referred to as the Muslim period To talk of Muslim rule implied that all rulers were Muslims and all Hindus were the ruled The actual fact was that the rules, nobles, chiefs, and zamindars, whether Hindu or Muslim, treated the masses, both Hindu and Muslim Alike that is, with the same contempt and disregard, as inferior creatures to be made use of for their own benefit The Muslim masses were as poor and as oppressed by the taxes as the Hindu masses These historians did not realize that politics in India during the ancient and medieval periods was like politics anywhere else, and followed the dictates of the economic and political interests of the rulers and seldom any religious considerations No doubt, both the rules and the rebels often used religion as an outer colouring to disguise themselves were religious or communal Again, the, British and communal historians did not lay stress on the composite culture of India The cultural pattern of India was, undoubtedly, diverse, but, there was a common threat running through, and, what is more important, the diversity was primarily class-wise and region-wise By introducing the false concept of distinct and separate Hindu and Muslim cultures the communal approach to history came to generate devise tendencies

The effects of religious reform movements

The religious reform movements also had a similar impact These movements made an important contribution as they opposed irrational, and obscurantist thinking, spread rational and humanistic ideas, weeded out many of the fostered greater self-respect among the Indian people At the same time

many of them tended to divide Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Parsees as also high caste Hindus from low caste Hindus Any over-emphasis on religion in a country of many religions was bound to have a divisive effect Moreover, the reforms put a one-sided emphasis on the religious and philosophical aspects of cultural heritage These aspects were not a common heritage of all people On the other hand, art and architecture, literature, music, science and technology in which all sections of the people had played and equal role were not sufficiently emphasized In addition, the Hindu reforms invariably confined their praise of the Indian past to its ancient period Even a broad-minded man such as Swami Vivekananda talked of the Indian spirit or India's past achievements in this sense alone Similarly, many of the Muslim reformers turned to the history of West Asia for their traditions and moments of pride Thus, the reformers's activities tended to create the notion of two separate peoples Moreover, some of the religious tended to create the notion of two separate peoples Moreover, some of the religious reform movements did not confine their activities to positive aspects of reform They also started crusades against other religions, thus contributing to the growth of communalism in the 20th century

The fear of minority

The communal view of politics was unscientific and irrational but it played upon the fears from which a minority tends to suffer Under such circumstances it is the duty of the religious majority to convince the minority by its attitude and behaviour that its numbers would not be used to injure the minority They must not only convince the members of the minority community that their religion and social and cultural traits will be taken purely on secular considerations and religion will not be a factor in

arriving at them This is exactly what the early nationalists did They tried to unite the people and weld them into a nation on the basis of their common interests—national, economic and political They gave assurances that there would be no interference with the religious and social life of the people The Indian National Congress even went to the extent of agreeing in 1889 that no proposal would be endorsed which was considered harmful to the Muslims by a majority of the Muslims delegates In other words, the early nationalists tried to modernize the political outlook of the people by teaching that politics should not be based on religion and community

The work of militant nationalists

Unfortunately, some of the later leaders did not strictly conform to these wise postulates of secular politics The militant nationalists gave a great fillip to the national movement and made the people surge forward with energy and drive, but some of their actions led to the resurgence of communalism and was a step back in respect of the growth of national unity Their propoganda and publicity were effective in arousing the people but they did have a considerable religious flavour They emphasized the ancient Indian heritage to the exclusion of the medieval Indian culture They tended to identify the Indian nation with he Hindus and Indian culture with Hindu religion and what they considered to be the Aryan heritage For example, the Shivaji and Ganapathi festivals organized by Tilak, the semi-mystical approach of Aurobindo to India as mother and nationalism as a religion, the oaths the terrorists took before Goddess Kali, purifactory baths in the Ganga for the auspicious inauguration of the anti-partition campaign—these were not likely to, appeal to all Indias everywhere

Hindu bias at that While ordinary secular-minded Indias might not have liked this religious aura collecting around a purely political movement, some Muslims and followers of other religions, no doubt, found the imagery and the ritual repugnant to their faith and susceptibilities Similarly, an uncritical praise of the ancient period and religion was not acceptable to the lower caste Indians who had for centuries suffered under the most destructive caste oppression which had developed precisely during the ancient period Again, if one tried to make a national hero out of Shivaji and Pratap, one automatically implied that Mughals rulers were anti-national 'foreigner' But, in fact, the latter were as much Indians as the former Moreover, all of them belonged to the ruling classes Their mutual struggles had to be viewed as political struggles in their particular historical settings To view Pratap and Shivaji as 'national' heroes and Akbar and Aurangzeb as 'foreigners' was to project into past history current communal ways of thought This was both bad history and blow to national unity

True, Tilak, Lajpat Rai, Aurobindo and later Gandhiji were strong believers in Hindu- Muslim unity, but in their writings and speeches they often employed a language, imagery and symbolism derived exclusively from Hindu sources (e g the slogan of Ram Rajya popularized by Gandhiji) had a religious tinge and did create a reaction in the Muslim mind True, the references to Hindu theology were intended to involve the politically inert masses into the nationalist struggle by explaining to the nationalism couched in a language within their comprehension, i e religious phraeology, but it did have the undesired effect of rousing Muslim communal susceptibilities—feelings cleverly exploited by the British rulers

This does not, of course, mean that the militant nationalists were anti-Muslim or even mainly communal-minded On the contrary, many of them, especially Tilak, were all for Hindu-Muslim unity Most of them were modern and progressive in their thinking Even the terrorists were in practice inspired by similar terrorists in the European countries, who believed that economic redress and political freedom could be achieved only through a violent revolution But the fact remains that there was a certain Hindu tinge in the political work and ideas of the militant nationalists Their ultimate objectives might have been secular but their formal behaviour was not British and Pro-British propagandists cleverly took advantage of this fact This resulted in a large number of educated Muslims remaining aloof from to turning hostile to the national movement, thus falling an easy prey to a separatist outlook Even so, quite a large number of advanced Muslim intellectuals such as the barrister Abdul Rasul and Hasrat Mohani joined the Swadeshi movement and Mohammed Ali Jinnah became one of the leading younger leaders of the National Congress

Sectarian tendencies

In a poor, backward country which was being actively underdeveloped under colonial domination, employment opportunities were limited especially to the educated classes There was, there for, stiff competition for the limited number of available jobs in the country at that time The far-sighted Indians worked for the economic and political uplift of the country But the situation was also exploited by vested interests, both Indian and British, to arouse communal, religious, as also caste and regional feelings There as a clamour for reservation of seats and jobs for all sorts and kinds of sections and groups Narrow-minded, shortsighted Muslims and Hindus

alike began talking about their own nationalism, as though nationalism was divisible and could be of many sectarian kinds and economic welfare could be promoted other than by a common struggle against imperialism and the vested interests

In the absence of any avenues of gainful employment in trade and industry, the British Indian Government remained the biggest employer to which the educated young hopeful looked fro their means of livelihood This enormous patronage - in higher and subordinate services - was cleverly used by the rules to promote rivalry and discord among different sections of society Our nationalist leaders were fully aware of the mischievous character of this bait but the hunger-rather compulsion - for loaves and fishes blinded them to its dangerous potentialities Jawaharlal Nehru explained thus, "This enormous patronage was exercised to strengthen the British hold on the country, to crush discordant and disagreeable elements, and to promote rivalry and discord amongst various groups anxiously looking forward to employment services It led demoralization and conflict and the government could pay one group against the other"

The formation of Muslim League

A concrete shape and setting to the communal theory was given on 1906 when the All India Muslim League was set up under the leadership of the Aga Khan, Nawab Salimullah of Dacca and Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk The self-interest of one section of educated Muslims and the reactionary vested interests of the Muslim zamindars and upper classes, was responsible for this retrograde step The league supported the partition of Bengal and demanded special safeguard and separate electorates The British were waiting for

just such an opportunity They made full use of it and announced that they would protect the special interests' of the Muslims The league loyally undertook to oppose every national and democratic demand of the Congress In Bengal, the loyalist League leaders were big zamindars who were, moreover, outsiders in Bengali, they were not Bengalis Consequently, they had little sympathy for the Bengali Muslim tenants

Almost from the beginning the fundamental falseness of the League claim that the interests of the Muslims were different and divergent from those of the rest of the nation, was obvious to a large section of the educated and modern Muslim young men They were attracted by radical, nationalist ideas and they refuted the notion that the League represented the views and interests of all Muslims The Ahrar movement which was both national and militant, was started at about this time by leaders such as Maulana Mohammad Ali, Hakim Ajmal Khan and Azhar-ul-Haq Similarly, a section of the traditional Muslim scholars, roused by patriotism, began participating in national politics eschewing communal ways of thinking The most prominent among these was Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad

During the first few years of the second decade of the present century Turkey had to fight wars against Italy first, and, later, with the Balkan powers Turkey at that time was the strongest Muslim power Its empire included most of the places holy to Muslims Till 1857, the Indian Muslims had Recognized the Mughal emperor as Imam, i e both political and religious head

After the deposition of the Mughal emperor and the growing Pressure of Russia upon the Ottoman empire the British decided to safeguard Turkey and

emerge as the champions of the Muslims They, therefore, encouraged the growth of a pan-Islamic movement which implied accepting the Sultan of Turkey as the Caliph of all the Muslims When the safety and welfare of Turkey were threatened by the British during the First World War, Indians reacted sharply Anti-British and anti-imperialist sentiments grew rapidly among the Muslims As a direct result of this the radical young Muslims in India joined the nationalist ranks which were also anti-imperialist For several years, between 1912 and 1924, the loyalist Muslim Leaguers were completely stripped of all influence by nationalist young Muslims

But there was a negative side to these developments The agitation in the *Khilafat* question deflected the thinking of the educated, militant, nationalist Muslims from a radical secular approach to politics Instead of taking up the fight against British imperialism on the ground that it undermined the economic and political interests of the people, they took it up because the Caliphate and the holy places in the ottoman empire were endangered Moreover, the heroes and myths and cultural traditions they appealed to belonged not to ancient or medieval Indian history but to West Asian history Thus, even their political appeal was based on religious sentiments In the long run, this approach too proved detrimental to the growth of nationalism, because it did not promote among the Muslim masses a scientific and secular attitude to political and economic questions

While no organized Hindu communal movement and organizations opposing the Indian National Congress emerged during the period Hindu communal ideas were widespread One reason why no separate Hindu communal organization came into being was that the Hindu communal trend found accommodation

within the broad nationalist trend unlike the Muslim communal trend which had to function outside the nationalist a stream Some leaders began talking about Hindu nationalism, about Muslims as 'foreigners', about safeguarding Hindu interests, even about a 'Hindu' share of seats in the legislatures and the services Thus, Muslim and Hindu communalism interacted and provided sustenance to each other

For about a decade after 1913 the Muslim League came under the influence of progressive Muslim leaders like Maulana Mohammad Ali, Maulana Mazhar -ul-Huq Syed Wazir Hussain Hussain Imam and M A Jinnah (then a nationalist) From 1920 to 1923 the activities of the Muslim League remained suspended However, the appointment of the Simon Commission and the Round Table Conference at London that followed again brought the Muslim League into activity By 1934 M A Jinnah, now a communalist, became its undisputed leader The Communal Award of the British Government further widened the gulf between the Hindus and the Muslims

Congress Ministries and the Muslim League, 1937-39

The first elections for the provincial legislative councils under the government of India Act 1935 were held in 1937 The Muslim League contested the elections to various legislative bodies but achieved moderate success Out of the 485 reserved Muslim seats, the League could capture only 110 seats Even in the Muslin-majority provinces of the Punjab, the North-West Frontier Province, Bengal and Sindh the League was trounced by rival Muslim parties The Congress party gained as absolute majority in Bombay, Madras, U P , Bihar, Orissa and the Central Provinces and was the largest single party in the N W F P The Congress

in provinces like Bengal, Assam and the Punjab ministers in U P and Bihar The congress consistent with its principles and policies and being proud of its non-communal outlook and policies - liberation of the country and amelioration of the condition of the masses- advised Muslim League members to sign the Congress pledge and become its members, if they desired to accept responsibilities of office

It is interesting to note that during the 1930s the Muslim League was strong only in the areas where the Muslims were in minority The reason is nothing but the majority- the Hindu Community failed to convince them that their fears are groundless and their religious interest would be safe

The two-nation theory and the Pakistan Movement

The poet and political thinker Mohammad Iqbal is thought to be the originator of the ideas of a separate Muslim State for the Indian Muslims and is believed to have given the necessary emotional content to the movement Inspired by the spirit of Pan-Islamism Iqbal declared at the Allahabad session of the All India Muslim League, held in 1930, "I have no hesitation in declaring that if the principle that the Indian Muslim is entitled to full and free development on the lines of his own culture and tradition in his own Indian homeland is recognised as the basis of a permanent communal settlement I would like to see the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single State Self-government within the British empire or without the British empire, the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim State appears to be the final destiny of the Muslims, at least of North-west India"

The idea of a separate homeland for Muslims to be called Pakistan took a definite shape in the mind of

a young under-graduate at Cambridge, Rahmat Ali He visualized the Punjab, N W F P (also called Afghan Province, Kashmir, Sind, and Baluchistan as the national home of the Indian Muslims and he coined the word Pakistan in 1933 The word Pakistan was formed by taking the initials of the first four and the last of the fifth Rahmat Ali maintained that the Hindus and Muslims were fundamentally distinct nations He wrote, "our religion, culture, history, tradition, literature, economic system, laws of inheritance, succession and marriage are fundamentally different from those of the Hindus These differences are not confined to the broad basic principles They extend to the minute details of our lives We, Muslims and Hindus, do not interdine, we do not intermarry Our national customs and calendars, even our diet and dress are different"

The most unequivocal declaration of the Hindus and Muslims as separate nationalities was made by M A Jinnah at the Lahore in March 1940 "They (Hindus and Muslims) are not religions in the strict sense of the word, but are, infact, different and distinct social orders, and it is a dream that Hindus and Muslims can ever evolve a common nationality The Hindus and Muslims belong to two different religious philosophies, social customs, literatures To yoke together two such nations under a single State, one of a numerical minority and the other as a majority, must lead to growing discontent and final destruction of any fabric that may be so built up for the government of such a State"

Demanding the partition of India, the Muslim League passed the resolution "It is the considered view of this session of the All Indian Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to the Muslims unless it is

designed on the following basic principle, Viz , that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary," that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority, as in the North-Western and Eastern zones of India, should be grouped to constitute `independent states' in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign This resolution did not specify the areas in the proposed state of Pakistan In 1942 Mr Jinnah explained to Professor Coupland that Pakistan would be "a Muslim State or States comprising N W F P , the Punjab, and Sind on the one side of India and Bengal on the other" He did not mention Baluchistan and Assam, nor did he claim Kashmir and Hyderabad However, in a Memorandum to the Cabinet Mission on 12 May, 1946, the Muslim League demanded "the six Muslim provinces (Punjab, N W F P , Baluchistan, Sind, Bengal, Assam) shall be grouped together as one Group"

Thus the Lahore session of the Muslim League gave it an Ambition and a Programme Henceforth the demand for Pakistan became as much an article of faith for the Indian Muslims as their holy book, the Koran

The Hindu Mahasabha

British imperial policies in India provided a congenial climate for the emergence, growth and popularity of communal organisations A communal organisation though primarily organised to promote the interests of a particular community also indirectly promoted British imperial interests apart from serving the personal ambition of opportunistic leadership This was not only true of the Hindu Mahasabha but also of the Muslim League, the Akali Dal and the All India

Depressed Classes Federation The genesis and early history of the Hind Mahasabha are cloude in obscurity In 1910 the leading Hindus of Allahabad decided to organise an All Mahasabha organised a Hindu Conference at Amritsar The Hindu Mahasabha set up its headquarters at Hardwar and used to organise the Akhil Bharatiya Hindu Conference at Hardwar on the occasion of important Hindu fairs

The communal riots particularly in the Malabar coast and Multan that followed the suspension of the first Non-cooperation movement in 1922 caused heavy losses to the Hindus both in human lives and property A section of the Hindus decided to organise the Hindus in self-defence Explaining the rationale of the Hindu Mahasabha, Pt Madan Mohan Malaviya explained that the Mohammedans and the Christians had been carrying on proselytizing activities for centuries, the majority of the Muslims of India were converts from Hinduism, he added To check this process, it was necessary to organise a Hindu Mission Malaviya further explained that as a countermove to the Muslim League putting forward exaggerated claims for Muslim representation in the elected bodies, it was necessary to organise the Hindus to get a fair deal for their community Thus *Shudhi* and *Sangathan* became the watchwords of the Hindu Mahasabha in the early years of its existence Malavya also emphasised the socio-cultural mission of the Hindu Mahasabha The Indian national congress being a political organisation, Malaviya added, it could not deal with social, cultural and non-political spheres The Hindu mahasabha was organised to remove the social abuses in Hindu mahasabha did not in any way clash etc As such, Malaviya empahasised, that the Hindu Mahasabha did not in any way clash with the Congress but was planned to supplement and strengthen the Indian

National Congress The tall claims of the Hindu Mahasabha as a socio-cultural organisations were hardly less hypocritical than similar claims put up by the Muslim League, the Akali Dal and other communal organisations Under the leadership of V D Savarkar who became the President of the Hindu Mahasabha in 1938 and was re-elected again and again, the Mahasabha developed a political programme Sore at the Muslim appeasement policy of the Indian National Congress, Savarkar popularized the concept of Hindu Rashtra Savarkar maintained that India was a land of Hindus having only one nation i e the Hindu nation The Muslims must accept their position as a minority community in a single Indian State, of course being promised just treatment and equal political rights on the basis of 'one man, one vote ' On the question of a national language, Savarkar upheld that according to democratic practices language of the majority must prevail

After the death of V D Savarkar, Dr S P Mookherji became the leader of the Hindu Mahasabha and imparted it a more nationalist outlook

The Hindu Mahasabha never gained that popularity with the Hindu masses as the Muslim League did with the Muslims in India All the same against the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan, it raised the slogan of Akhand Hindustan The Hindu Mahasabha's propaganda of a Hindu race, Hindu culture, Hindu civilization and Hindu Rashtra in India harden the Muslim League's attitude and made it more suspicious and more determined to demand Pakistan It must, however, be said, in all fairness that the Muslim League was the first ever communal organisation to come into existence, the communal poison proved infectious and the Hindu mahasabha

and other communal organisations came into existence as a counterpoise to one another

The communalism and the final stage of struggle

In response to the Congress offer for cooperation with the British Government conditional on its declaration of "the full independence of India" and formation of a Provisional National Government at the Centre, Lord Linthithgow in August 1940 offered the plan of setting up a constitution-making body after the war but assured the minorities that the British Government would not agree to any system of government whose authority was directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life The Muslim League welcomed this part of the August Offer and passed the resolution, "The partition of India is the only solution of the most difficult problem of India's future constitution"

Cripps mission (1942) and encouragement to separatist forces

The Cripps Plan (March-April 1942) carried further the Muslim League's demand for the partition of India The draft Declaration of the British Government contained the provision for acceptance of the new constitution of India to be framed after the end of the war, subject to the condition

"Any Province of British India might refuse to accept the new Constitution and choose to retain its existing constitutional position, provision being made for its subsequent accession to the Indian Union if it so decided

"With such non-acceding Provinces, if they so desired, the British Government would be prepared to agree upon a new Constitution, giving them the same full status as the Indian Union"

The Muslim League rejected this Cripps Plan and reiterated the demand for Pakistan]

Wavell Plan (1945) and the Communal Impasse

Mr Amery, the Secretary of State, announced in the House of Commons on 14 June, 1945, "The offer of March 1942 stands in its entirety without change or qualification" There-constitution of the Governor-General's Executive Council was proposed to be done by nominating all of them except the Commander-in-Chief from amongst leaders of Indian political life The Executive Council was to have "a balanced representation of the main communities, including equal propositions of Muslims and Caste Hindus" Lord Wavell called a conference at Simla in June-July 1945 to sort out an agreement between the Congress and the Muslim League The Congress proposed to include two Congress Muslims out its quota Mr Jinnah insisted that all Muslim members of the Council must be nominated by the League Lord Wavell announced the breakdown of the conference, giving the general impression that Mr Jinnah had been given the veto to torpedo all constitutional advance in India

The Cabinet Mission (1946) and the Communal Tangle

In the election of 1945-46 the Muslim League captured an overwhelming majority of Muslim seats in all the provinces except the N W F P , while the League came in power in Bengal and Sind In the Punjab a Unionist Ministry was formed although the League was the Single largest party The elections demonstrated that the Muslim League was a strong political party in the country

The Cabinet Mission comprising Lord Pethick - Lawrence (Secretary of State), Sir Stafford Cripps (President of the Board of Trade) and Mr A V Alexander (First Lord of the Admiralty) reached India

in March 1946 Meanwhile Prime Minister Attlee announced in the House of Commons that a minority could not be allowed to put a veto on the advance of the majority

The Cabinet Mission rejected the demand for Pakistan and suggested instead a Central Government in charge of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communications It, however, conceded the Muslim League's demand half-way by grouping province in three groups The "Full autonomy" to the provinces and the provision for grouping gave to the Muslim League "the substance of Pakistan"

Further the Cabinet Mission plan laid down procedure for the election of Constitution-making body In the election to the Constituent Assembly, the Congress won 199 of the 210 General seats, the League bagged 73 of the 78 Muslim seats Mr Jinnah maintained that the Congress having support of 211 members out of the total strength of 296 of the Constituent Assembly would placed the Muslims at their mercy He, therefore, demanded two Constitution-making bodies, one for the people of India and one for Pakistan

Direct action and communal riots, 1946-47

The Muslim League withdrew is acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Plan and observed 16th August as 'Direct Action Day' Direct Action was not directed for wresting Pakistan from the hands of the unwilling British Government but was directed against the Hindus The league engineered communal riots in Bengal, U P , Bombay, the Punjab, Sind and the N W F P

In the Interim Government formed on September 2, 1946, under the leadership of Mr J L Nehru, the

Muslim League refused to join, later agreed to join on 26 October, 1946, not 'to work it but to wreck it' form inside All the same the Muslim League refused to join the Constituent Assembly

Attlee's Statement, 20 February 1947 Divide and Quite policy

Prime Minister Attlee announced in the House of Commons the 'definite intention" of the British Government "to effect the transference of power to responsible Indian hands by a date not later than June 1948" In the absence of the Muslim League's co-operation the British Government would have "to consider to whom the power of the Central Government in British India should be handed over, on due date, whether as a whole to some from of Central Government for British India, or in some areas to the existing Provincial Governments, or i such other way as may seem most reasonable and in the best interests of the Indian people" Thus the British Government's decision to maintain some sort of unity of India underwent a changed and it veered round to the possibility of setting up Pakistan

Mountbatten Plan of partition of India, 3 June 1947

Lord Mountbatten who succeeded Lord Wavell as Viceroy of India in March 1947 offered a plan for the partition of India in his 3 June 1947 announcement The plan provided for referendum in the N W F P to decide whether the province would join India or Pakistan A referendum was to be held in the Muslim-majority district of Sylhet to decide whether the district would join East Bengal or remain part of Assam The legislative Assemblies of Bengal and Punjab were to meet each in two sections or parts (one representing the Muslim majority district and the other the rest of the province) to decide by a simple majority whether the province was to be partitioned

or not The Hindu members of the Punjab and Bengal Assemblies decided in favour of partition of those provinces East Bengal and West Punjab decided to join Pakistan while West Bengal and East Punjab joined India The referendum in Sylhet district of Assam went in favour of Pakistan The N W F P decided to join Pakistan

The Indian Independence Act and Partition of India

The Indian Independence Act passed by the Parliament in July 2947 provided for the setting up of two independent dominions of India and Pakistan with effect from 15 August 1947

Was the partition of India inevitable and Unavoidable

The answers of these questions differ widely with the nationality of the writer Indian, Pakistan or British

In India the partition of the country is considered a tragedy It is projected as the logical culmination of the long-standing British policy of Divide and Rule and the Muslim League's ideology of communalism and separateness The two worked together and forced the Indian National Congress to agree to the partition of India Indian writers largely place the blame at the door of the Congress leaders and agree that if they had shown adequate understanding, tact and boldness, the partition of the Motherland could be avoided In Pakistan, however, the partition is considered as quire logical and inevitable and the growth of Muslim nationalism is traced in the depth of Indian history Among the British scholars there is unanimity of opinion about the rationale of the partition of India and there is difference of opinion among historians and those writers who served the raj in India

Whatever the verdict of history, credit must be given to Mr M A Jinnah for his adroit handling of the

political situation He was a very shrews politician and often dodged his political rivals by clever somersaults He rose from strength to strength and earned the epithet of the Qaid-i-Azam Jawahar Lal Nehru attributes the growth of Muslim communalism to the delay in the growth of a strong Muslim middle class, this enabled the League to work up the psychology of fear among the emotionally excitable Muslim masses The cry of 'Islam in Danger' brought the Muslim masses under the banner of the League and Mr Jinnah stood forth as the political Messiah All said, the acts of omission and commission of the art of the Hindu Mahasabha further fanned the fanaticism of the Muslim League Mr V D Savarkar, the President of Mahasabha, advocated 'an uncompromising doctrine of Hindu ascendancy' and openly announced that 'the only way to deal with the Hindu-Muslim schism was to insist that all India was Hindustan and that the Muslims must reconcile themselves to the status of a minority community in a democratic state which orders life by majority rule'

59

Nationalist Movement in India

It is wrong to say that the Nationalist Movement in India was the result of a few agitators Basically, nationalism in India arose to meet the challenge of foreign domination The very existence of a foreign rule helped the growth of a national sentiment among the people There was also a clash between the British interests in India and those of the Indian people The British had conquered India to promote their own interests and they ruled over her primarily with that object in view With the passage of time, there was a realisation in India and that realisation brought bitterness against foreign rule and that was responsible for the growth of the nationalist movement to drive out the foreigners from the country All classes of people in India joined at one stage or the other the nationalist movement The intelligentsia in India, the peasants, the, artisans and the workers all played their part in the freedom

Causes

The nationalist movement in India was the outcome of a large number of factors and the most important among them was British imperialism It was during the British rule that the whole of India was conquered and brought under one sovereign authority This domination by one country over the whole of India enabled the people of India to think and act as one nation Before the coming of he British to India the

people of the South were usually separated from the rest of India except for short intervals, British imperialism helped the process of the unification of the country British imperialism in India gave her a political unity under a third party in spite of the many discordant elements in Indian society The improvements in the means of transport and communication also quickened the pace of the nationalist movement in the country The Indian leaders found themselves in a position to carry on their propaganda in every nook and corner of the country Without those means of communication and transport, such a tiling would have been unthinkable, The frequent meetings of the leaders among themselves and their personal contact with the people in different parts of the country gave a momentum to the nationalist movement Many scholars, poets and religious reformers contributed towards nationalist movement The study and publication a the ancient Indian literature by the Asiatic Society of , Bengal and scholars like Max Muller, Monier Williams, Colebrooke, Ranade, Hay Prasad Sastri, R G Bhandarkar, Rajendra Lal Mitra, etc , revealed to the people of India the majesty of the Sanskrit language and also inculcated among them a feeling of pride in their past and their faith in the future The religious and social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Keshab Chandra Sen, Debendra Nath Tagore, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Ramakrishna Paramhans, Vivekanand, and others exercised a tremendous influence on the people India and they were responsible in different ways in putting, the people of India on the road to progress It is contended that political agitation in India began with Raja Ram Mohan Roy His study of English literature, history and parliamentary institutions acquainted him with the western political ideas and he introduced the

methods of political agitation by petitions, pamphlets, memorials, public meetings and the press He was a great lover of liberty To him, liberty was indivisible The enslavement of one section of humanity was incompatible with the liberty of another section He followed with intense interest the course of the French Revolution He is said to have given a public dinner in the Town Hall of Calcutta as a mark of his joy at the establishment of constitutional government in Spain Keshab Chandra Sen also made his contribution towards the cause of nationalism by helping the movement for social and religious reform The missionaries of the Brahmo Samaj carried their message of new religious and social freedom far and wide all over the Indian continent

Swami Dayanand Saraswati founded the Arya Samaj He preached to the people of India the lesson of self-confidence and faith in their future He reminded them of the glory and greatness of India's past and exhorted his audience to leave no stone unturned to make India great He declared that good government was no substitute for self-government and the rule of India by the Indians was to be preferred in every way It is well-known that many leaders of the Arya Samaj like Lala Lajpat Rai played a glorious part in the nationalist movement of the country Col Olcott has rightly pointed out that Swami Dayanand exercised great nationalising influence upon his followers Dayanand Saraswati who proclaimed India for the Indians Ramakrishna Paramhans exercised great influence on his followers He has rightly been given the credit of assisting the growth of national consiciousness among the people The Ramakrishna Math and Mission have in many ways helped the cause of self-consciousness among the people of India Swami Vivekanand was the pupil of Ramakrishna

Paramhans and he in, his own way helped the people of India in reviving their faith in the future of the country About Swami Vivekanand, Niveditta says "The queen of his adoration was the motherland," Like Swami Dayanand, Swami Vivekanand taught young India self-confidence and self-reliance The founders of the Theosophical Society of India and Mrs Annie Besant made their own contribution towards the cause of the national awakening They asked the people of India to realise that they were not so bad as the Christian missionaries painted them to be They were as good as many advanced people of the world were, They asked the people of India to look to their glorious past and try to bring back the same They taught people to have faith in themselves The Indian press and literature, both English and Vernacular, also aroused national consciousness Great was the influence of newspapers like the Indian Mirror, the Bombay Samachar, the Hindu Patriot, The Amrita Bazar Patrika, The Hindu, The Kesari, The Bengalee, The Hurkura, The Bengal Public Opinion, The Reis and Rayet, the Somprokash, The Sulabh Samachar, The Sanjibam, The Sadharm, The Hitavadi, The Rast Goftar, The Indu Prakash, The Standard, The Swadeshmitran, The Herald of Bihar, The Advocate of Luknow, etc, on the political life of the country The growth of the Indian press was phenomenal and by 1875, there were no less than 478 newspapers in the, country Without them, it would have been, impossible to create an atmosphere in which the people of India could be made to think of their common problems and common grievances Undoubtedly, the Indian Press played a meritorious role in not only creating a national awakening in the country but also guiding the people of India throughout their struggle for independence It goes without saying that the Indian press also paid a part of the price for the freedom of

the country The Indian press Was the target of the British Government from the very beginning but it boldly and fearlessly faced the challenge

The writings of Dinbandhu Hemchandra Banerjee, Navin Chandra Sen, R C Dutt, Rabindra Nath Tagore and Bankim Chandra Chatterjee affected the minds of the people of India Through his writings, Rabindra Nath Tagore appealed to the higher sentiments of the people of India to work for the glory of their country, He tried to raise the moral tone of his countrymen The Anand Math of Bankim Chandra Chatterji which embodied the patriotic song "Bande Mataram" has rightly been called "The Bible of Modern Bengalee patriotism " It goes without saying that the concepts of nationality and patriotism were known to the Indians throughout their history Ancient literature and religious texts testify to a well-defined image of Mother India and to a closer consciousness of national solidarity The ancient Indians gave it the name of Bharatvarsha or simply Bharat, The Puranas expressly define the term Bharat as the country that lies north of the Indian Ocean and south of the snowy Himalayas The Hindu consciousness of national frontiers is illustrated in their institution of pilgrimages which expects a Hindu to visit the various holy places, distributed throughout the length and breadth of the country There was a lot of discontentment in the country on account of many causes and that discontentment gave a stimulus to the growth of the nationalist movement in the country The masses suffered from economic troubles The middle classes suffered from the bugbear of unemployment All the intelligent Indians felt and bewailed the economic exploitation of their country The British officials working in India were a very heavy drain on the Indian resources The economic

system of India was adjusted to the needs of the people of England The interests of the Indians were completely ignored Blunt rightly points out that the vice of Indian finance was that the Finance Minister of India looked more to the interests of Great Britain than to those of India All tariff duties were abolished in 1879 with a view to benefit Lancashire In 1895, an excise duty of 5 per cent was imposed on Indian cotton goods with a view to countervail similar tariff on Lancashire goods imposed in the interests of revenue The value of the Indian rupee in terms of the English pound was fixed in such a way as to help imports from England and discourage exports froth India Sir Henry Cotton condemned the economic exploitation of India and the consequent miseries of the people of the country The Indians resented the attitude of the Englishmen towards them The Europeans in India were arrogant They had a very low opinion of the Indian character They took pleasure in calling the Indians the creatures of an inferior, breed, "half Gorilla, haif Negro" They ridiculed the Indian black heathens "worshipping stocks and stones and swinging themselves on bamboo trees like bees" The European masters regarded the Indians as "the helots of the land, the hewers of wood and the drawers of water" The life of an Indian has estimated by most Europeans as no higher than that of a dog In 1819, Sir Thomas Munro confessed that although the foreign conquerors have treated the natives with violence and cruelty, they had not treated them with so much scorn as the Englishmen had done Seton Kerr, a Secretary to the Government of India, spoke of the "cherished conviction which was shared by every Englishman in India, from the highest to the lowest the conviction in every man that he belongs to a race which God has destined to govern and subdue" Lord Roberts, who at one time was the Commander-in-Chief of India, did not

regard even the bravest of the Indian soldiers as equal to a British officer

There was a lopsided development of the Indian economy, while Indian handicrafts and industries were allowed to starve, Indian agriculture was encouraged with a purpose Most of the raw materials were produced in the country so that those could be used to feed the, industries in England That policy made India dependent on England That policy made policy helped the British manufacturers and sacrificed the interests of India The public debt increased tremendously After 1858, the Crown took over the entire debt of 70 millions from the English East India Company Between 1858 and 1876, the public debt was practically doubled Out of the additional debt, only about 24 millions were spent on the construction of railways and irrigation works No proper use of the money was made while constructing the railways Those who constructed them were given more than what was due to them Before the outbreak of the Mutiny in 1857, there were many Englishmen who honestly believed and worked for the good of India However, during the Mutiny days a lot of blood was shed on both sides The Europeans wreaked their vengeance on the helpless and innocent Indians after the Mutiny It was this policy of oppression and repression which added to the discontent of the country The Indians were completely excluded from the legislatures in the country and also from the key-posts in the administration

The English language played a very important part in the growth of nationalism in the country It acted as the lingua franca of the intelligentsia of India Without the common medium of the English language, it would have been out of the question for the Madrasis, Bengalees and the Punjabis to sit at one

able and discuss the common problems facing the country The English language also made the Indians inheritors of a great literature which was full of great ideas and ideals The ground was ready and acts of omission and commission in the time of Lord Lytton accelerated the nationalist movement The period from 1876 to 1884 has been called the seedtime of Indian nationalism Lord Lytton held his famous Delhi Durbar in 1877 at a time when the people of South India were suffering terribly from the destruction brought about by famine They wondered at the callousness of Lytton Nero was fiddling while Rome was burning The second Afghan War cost the Indian treasury a lot No wonder, the Indians criticised Lytton mercilessly In order to gag the Indian public opinion, Lytton passed the notorious Vernacular Press Act in 1878 The discriminatory provisions of this Act were universally condemned by the people belonging to all walks of life Sir Erskine Perry points out that the Act was a retrograde and ill-conceived measure injurious to the future progress of India It was called the Gagging Act Lytton passed the Arms Act in 1878 which made an invidious distinction between the Indians and the Europeans While the Europeans were allowed to keep arms freely, the Indians could not do so without a licence, in the words of Surendra Nath Banerjee, the Arms Act imposed upon us a badge of racial inferiority Such a measure was derogatory to the self-respect of the people of India Lord Lytton removed the import duty on cotton manufacturers with a view to help zhe British manufacturer his was resented by the Indians It is true, Lord Ripon tried to remove some of the grievances of India but before he could do so, the Ilbert Bill controversy came to the fore

The Ilbert Bill was a simple measure whose object

was to put the Indian judges on the same footing as the European judges in dealing with all cases in Bengal Presidency The necessity of this bill arose as the Indians who had joined the judicial service were rising in the ranks and that involved the possible trial of Europeans by an Indian judge without a jury This was considered to be too much by the Europeans A strong agitation was brought into existence by the Europeans who were not prepared to be tried by an Indian judge, Lord Ripon became the target of the agitation He was boycotted by the European community He was threatened to be kidnapped to England Ultimately a compromise was arrived at which suited the Europeans However this set a wrong precedent The flag of racialism was hoisted by the Europeans The Indians realised that they could not expect any justice or fair-play from the Englishmen when their own interests were involved, Surendranath Banerjee observes No self-respecting Indian could sit idle under the fierce light of that revelation It was a call to high patriotic duty to those who understood its significance Before the effect of the Ilbert Bill controversy was over, the Indians had already organised themselves into the Indian National Conference which was the forerunner of the Indian National Congress founded in 1885

Indian National Congress

There is no unanimity of opinion regarding the origin of the Indian National Congress Dr Pattabhi Sitaramayya says that the origins of the Congress are shrouded in mystery There are many accounts and theories about it

The most widely accepted view is that Hume, under the protection of Lord Dufferin, organised the Congress with two main purposes and those were to

provide a safety-valve to the anticipated or actual discontentment of the Indian intelligentsia and to form a quasi-constitutional party similar to Her Majesty's Opposition in England The W C Bonnerjee, the First Congress President, was that the Indian national Congress as it was originally started, was in reality the work of Lord Dufferin, Governor-General of India According to him, when Hume in 1884 conceived the idea that it would be a great advantage to the country if leading Indian politicians could be brought together once a year to discuss social matters and be upon friendly footing with one another, he did not desire that politics should form part of their discussions Hume was also of the view that the Governor of the province, where the politicians met, should be asked to preside and thereby cordiality should be established between the official classes and the non-official Indian politicians With these ideas, Hume met Lord Dufferin at Simla early in 1885 The Viceroy showed keen interest in the matter and after considering it for sonic time, fie sent for Hume and told him that in his opinion his project would not be of much use He suggested to him that there was no body of persons in India who performed the functions which Her Majesty's Opposition did in England Dufferin's view was that Indian politicians should meet every year and point out to the Government in what respects the administration was defective and how the same could be improved The assembly proposed by him should riot be presided over by the local Governor It is contended that Hume was convinced of the argument of Dufferin and when he placed the two schemes, his own and that of Dufferin, before the leading politicians in Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and other parts of the country, the latter unanimously accepted Dufferin's scheme and proceeded to give effect to it

Prof Sundar Raman has given a slightly different version of the same theory According to him, Dufferin persuaded Hume to stay on and work in India rather than go back to England and work from there The idea of Hume was to arouse the consciousness of the people of England by carrying on agitation in England However, Dufferin convinced Hume that the latter could secure his own aims best by confining the agitation to India for the present and by helping the Indian public men all over the country to organise and develop a national organisation in India conducted by her own leaders with the help and sympathy of men like Hume A similar view was expressed by Gokhale in 1913 in these words No Indian could have started the Indian National Congress Apart from the fact that any one putting his hand to such a gigantic task had need to have Mr Hume's commanding personality, even if an Indian had possessed such a personality and had come forward to start such a movement embracing all India, the officials would not have allowed it to come into existence If the founder of the Congress had not been a great Englishman and a distinguished ex-official, such was the distrust of political agitation in those days that the authorities would have at once found some way or the other of suppressing the movement

There is another theory which attributes Hume's initiative to the fear of a rebellion of the peasants, especially in Northern India There are two versions of the theory One view is that Hume came to know of the impending calamity while still a member of the Indian Civil Service through the secret reports from the C I D The other view is that Hume got the information not from official sources but from reports from Chelas and Gurus It was through them that Hume got containing references to a general state of

rebel, access to 7 large volumes containing references to a general state of rebellion in Northern India Critics point out that the theory of rebellion has no historical basis and it was merely for propaganda value

Another view is that the Theosophical Society of India was the parent of the Indian National Congress Olcott asserted in 1886 that the Theosophical Society had first shown the possibility of bringing men from different parts of India together into friendly relations which had never been known before Raghunath Rao and N N Sen virtually accused Hume of having stolen their thunder Their contention was that the real origin of the Congress should be traced back to the meeting held at Raghunath Rao's house in Madras late in December, 1884 Rejecting this view, critics point out that the idea of holding annual conferences of representative men from different parts of the country in order to promote national objectives had been current in India long before the founders of the Theosophical Society landed in Bombay in February, 1879

The view of Dr Nand Lal Chatterji is that the Congress was founded in fact as a precautionary move against an apprehended Russian invasion of India, The relations between Russia and Afghanistan were very strained over the question of Panjdeh and there was a danger of Great Britain being involved in it, The fear of Russian advance in Central Asia worried the Government of India and the people of India gave a demonstration of their loyalty to the Crown by offering themselves as volunteers for the defence of their country The Indian Press and the educated Indians demanded the organisation of a Volunteer Corps The attitude the Government was unsympathetic towards the movement which died out as the danger of Russian

invasion receded It is pointed out that Russophobia and the Volunteer Movement worked as a lever to political activity in India The prevailing atmosphere in the country was conducive to the birth and growth of an all India political organisation It was in March 1885 that the Russian danger was at its highest and it was then that Hume met the Viceroy and explained to him his proposal to organise the Indian National Congress and succeeded in securing the neutrality, it not active support, of the Viceroy Thus, Russophobia played its part in the creation of the Indian National Congress

The view gives the Congress an impressive origin, a birth in substance, a spontaneous character It is contended that "its roots are to be discovered in the separate political associations in various parts of India, It was watered by the controversies over the Vernacular Press Act, the Arms Act, the reduction of the age limit for entrance into the Indian Civil Service and the Ilbert Bill Another view is that the Congress was the first rich harvest of what had been sown long before by the wise and beneficent statesmen in the shape of schools and colleges The Congress was the outcome of those civilising influences which Macaulay and his co-adjutors were instrumental in implanting in the Government of the country Congress as the direct result of the noblest efforts of the British statesmen, the rational and healthy fruit of higher education and free institutions granted to the people of India The Congress was a visible embodiment of the national awakening in India as a result of the impact of Western civilisation on Indian thought

First session of congress

The first meeting of the Indian National Union which was subsequently renamed the Indian National

Congress was to be held at Poona but its venue had to be shifted to Bombay Originally it had been decided to request Lord Reay, Governor of Bombay, to be the first President of the Indian National Congress but the idea had to be dropped as the Governor was advised by the Viceroy not to accept the offer In his place, W C Bonnerjee, a leading Barrister of Calcutta and a very safe and loyal person, was elected the first President 72 delegates came front different parts of the country and most important among them were Dadabhai Naoroji, Ranade, Pherozeshah Mehta, K T Telang, Dinshaw Wacha, etc The meeting was truly a national gathering consisting of leading men from all parts of India

Second session

The second meeting of the Indian National Congress was held at Calcutta and was presided over by Dadabhai Naoroji Dadabhai praised the blessings of the British rule in India and he was cheered by the members of the audience Hume moved a resolution for three cheers, for Her Most Gracious Majesty, the Queen Empress and a further resolution for the long life of the Queen He also advised his colleagues to look upon Dufferin not as an enemy but as a friend and well-wisher Dufferin invited the members of the Congress as "distinguished visitors" to a garden party at the Government House, A similar welcome was given by tire Governor of Madras in 1887

However a change took place in the attitude of the Government After the Madras session in 1887, an aggressive propaganda was started among the masses Hume published a pamphlet entitled "An Old Man's Hope" in Which he appealed to the people of England in these words "Ah men! well-fed, and happy! Do you at all realise the dull misery of these countless

myriads? From their births to their deaths, how many rays of sunshine think you chequer their gloom-shronded paths? Toil Toil, Toil, hunger, hunger, hunger, sickness, suffering, sorrow, these alas, alas, alas are the key-notes of their short and sad existence In December 1889, the Congress Session was held at Bombay under the Chairmanship of Sir William Wedderburn It was attended by Charles Bradlaugh, a member of British Parliament He addressed the Congress in these words "For whom should I work if not for the people ? Born of the people, trusted by the people, I will die for the people "

Lahore session

Dadabhai Naoroji was re-elected as the President of the Lahore Session of the Congress held in December 1893 His travel from Bombay to Lahore presented the spectacle of a procession Citizens of the various places on the way presented him addresses At the Sikh Golden Temple at Amritsar, he was given a robe of honour He brought the following message from the Irish members of the British Parliament. Don't forget to tell your colleagues at the Congress that every one of the Ireland's Home Rule members in Parliament is at your back in the cause of the Indian people Addressing the audience at the Session, Dadabhai declared "Let us always remember that we are children of our mother country Indeed, I have never worked in any other spirit than that I am an Indian and owe duty to my work and all my countrymen Whether I am a Hindu or a Mohammedan, a Parsi, a Christian, or of any other creed, I am above all an Indian Our country is India, our nationality is Indian "

The next session of the Congress was held in Madras in 1894 under the Presidentship of Alfred

Webb, art Irish member of the British Parliament The next session was held at Poona in 1895 and was presided over by Surendranath Banerjee Gokhale presided over the Banaras Session of the Congress in 1905 The next session was held at Calcutta in 1906 under the Presidentship of Dadabhai Naoroji On that occasion, Dadabhai unfurled the flag of Swaraj for India and four resolutions on self-government, boycott, Swadeshi and national education were passed

The Moderatets

The early Congressmen who dominated the affairs of the Indian National Congress from 1885 to 1905 were known as the Moderates They belonged to a class which was Indian in blood and colour but British in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect They were supporters of British institutions They believed that what India needed was a balanced and lucid presentation of her needs before the Englishmen and their Parliament and their demands were bound to be satisfied They had faith in the British sense of justice and fairplay India's connection with the West through England was considered to be a boon and not a curse

The Moderates believed in lovalty to the British Crown This fact is clearly brought out by the statements made from time to time by the Moderate leaders Let us speak out like men and proclaim that we are loyal to the backbone, that we understand the benefits the English rule has conferred upon us Surendranath Banerjee described his attitude towards England in these words Let us work with unwavering loyalty to the British connection Then will the Congress have fulfilled its mission justified the hopes of those who founded it, one who worked for it not by the supersession of British rule in India, but by broadening its basis, liberalizing its spirit,

ennobling its character, and placing it upon the unchangeable foundations of a nation's affections It is not severance that we look forward to but unification, permanent embodiment, as an integral part of that great Empire which has given the rest of the world the models of free institutions Covered the world with free states " Again, To England we look for guidance To England we look for sympathy in the struggle From England must come the crowning mandate which will enfranchise our peoples England is our political guide and our moral preceptor in the exalted sphere of political duty English history has taught those Principles of freedom which we cherish with our life-blood We have been fed upon the strong food of English constitutional freedom

The Moderates relied upon the, solemn pledges given by the British Government to the people of India from time to time and the Queen's Proclamation of 1858 was one of them, Surendranath Banerjee called this proclamation as "The Magna Carta of our rights and liberties " The Proclamation, the whole Proclamation and nothing but the Proclamation is our watchword, our battle cry and the ensign of victory It is the gospel of our political redemption

The Moderates believed in orderly progress and constitutional agitation They believed in patience, steadiness, conciliation and union To quote Surendranath Banerjee, The triumphs of liberty are not to be won in a day Liberty is a jealous goddess exacting in her worship and claiming from her votaries prolonged and assiduous devotion in your devotion The Moderates believed in constitutional agitation within the four corners of law They believed that their main task, was to educate the people to arouse national political consciousness and to create a united public opinion on political to questions For this

purpose they held meetings They criticised the Government through the press They drafted and submitted memorials and petitions to the Government, to the officials of the Government of India and also to the British Parliament They also worked to influence the British Parliament and British public opinion The object of the memorials and petitions was to enlighten the British public and political leaders about the conditions prevailing in India Deputations of leading Indian leaders were sent to Britain in 1989 A British Committee of the Indian National Congress was founded in 1906 and that Committee started a journal called "India" Dadabhi' Naoroji spent a major part of his life and income in Britain doing propaganda among its people and politicians

The object before the Moderates was wider employment of Indians in higher offices in the public service and the establishment of representative institutions The root of all other Indian problems, it power were vested in us to legislate and to control the finances and to carry on the administration through and by our men, in accordance with the principles laid down by we should have self-government in the true sense This could be accomplished by the goodwill and cooperation of the British people With their firm faith in the values of Western culture and the sense of justice of the Englishmen, no other attitude was possible They believed in slow progress towards democracy which according to many of them was an exotic plant that would take to get acclimatised to the Indian soil and involve long training for the people to get used to it

The Moderates were fully aware of the fact that India was a nation in the making, Indian nationhood was gradually coming into being, and could not be taken for granted as an accomplished fact They

worked constantly for the development and consolidation of the feeling of national unity irrespective of region, caste of religion They hoped to make a humble beginning in this direction by promoting close contacts and friendly relations among the people from different parts of the country The economic and political demands of the Moderates were formulated with a view to unify the Indian people on the basis of a common political programme They organised a powerful all-India agitation against the abandonment of tariff-duties on imports and against the imposition of cotton excise duties This agitation aroused the feelings of the people and helped them to realise the real aims and purposes of British rule in India

The Moderates carried on agitation for the reduction of heavy land revenue payments They urged the Government to provide cheap credit to the peasantry through agricultural banks and to make available irrigation facilities on a large scale They asked lot improvement in the conditions of work of the plantation labourers They demanded a radical change in file existing pattern of taxation and expenditure which put a heavy burden on the poor while leaving the rich especially the foreigners, with a very light load They demanded the abolition of salt tax which hit the poor and lower middle classes hard The Moderates complained of India's growing poverty and economic backwardness and put all the blame, on the policies of the British Government They blamed the Government for the destruction of the indigenous industries in the country They demanded the rapid development of the modern industries and wanted the Government to give tariff protection to the Indian industries They advocated the use of Swadeshi goods and the boycott of British goods They demanded that

the economic drain of India by England must stop The Moderates criticised the individual administrative measures and worked hard to reform the administrative system which was ridden with corruption, inefficiency and oppression They demanded the Indianisation of the higher grades of the administrative services The demand was put forward on economic, political and moral grounds Economically, the high salaries paid to the Europeans put a heavy burden on Indian finance and contributed to the economic drain The Europeans sent out of India a large part of their salaries and also got their pensions in England That added to the drain of wealth from India Politically, the European civil servant ignored the needs of the Indians and favoured the European capitalists at the cost of their Indian counter-parts It was hoped that the Indianisation of the services would make the administration more responsive to Indian needs Morally, the existing system dwarfed the Indian character reducing the tallest Indian character reducing the tallest Indian to permanent inferiority in his own country

The Moderates demanded the separation of the judiciary front the executive They are opposed to the policy of disarming the people of India by the Government They wanted the Government to spend more money on the spread of education in the country They also took up the cause of the Indians who had migrated to the British colonies

The Moderates opposed tooth and nail the restrictions imposed by the Government on the freedom of speech and the press In 1897 Tilak and many other leaders were arrested and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment for spreading disaffection against the Government through their speeches and writings The Natu brothers of Poona were deported

without trial The arrest of Tilak marked the beginning of a new phase or the Nationalist movement There is scarcely a home in this vast country where Tilak is not now the subject of melancholy talk and where his imprisonment is not considered as a domestic calamity

The Moderates demanded the expansion and reform of the existing Legislative Councils They demanded the introduction of the system of direct elections and an increase in the number of members and powers of the Legislative Councils It is true that their agitation forced the Government to pass the Indian Councils Act of 1892 but the Moderates weVe not satisfied with what was given to the people of India No wonder, they declared the Act of 1892 as a "hoax " They demanded a larger share for the Indians in the Legislative Councils Later on, the Moderates put forward the claim for Swarajya or self-government within the British empire on the model of the other self-governing colonies

The basic weakness of the Moderates lay in their narrow social base Their movement did not have a wide appeal The area of their influence was limited to the urban community As they did not have the support of the masses, they declared that the time was not ripe for throwing out a challenge to the foreign rulers That was likely to invite premature repression If the Congress were to do anything such as you suggest the Government would have no difficulty in throttling it in five minutes However, it must not be presumed that the Moderate leaders fought for their narrow interests Their programmes and policies championed the cause of all sections of the Indian people and represented nationwide interests against colonial exploitation

Attitude of the government

As regards the attitude of the Government towards the Moderates, it became hostile soon after the inception of the Indian National Congress Lord Dufferin looked upon the foundation of the Congress with suspicion In 1887, he attacked the Congress and ridiculed it as representing a microscopic minority of the people Hamilton, Secretary of State for India, accused the Congress leaders of possessing seditious and doublesided character He went to the extent of abusing Dadabhai Naoroji and declared that Dadabhai's residence and association with radical and socialist British leaders had deteriorated whatever brains or presence of mind he may originally have possessed The British officers publicly criticised and condemned the Indian National Congress and its leaders They were branded as disloyal Babus, seditious Brahmins and violent villains

The Congress was described as a "factory of sedition" and the Congressmen as disappointed candidates for office and discontented lawyers who represented no one but themselves Lord Curzon declared it 1900 The Congress is tottering to its fall and one of my great ambitions, while in India is to assist it to a peaceful demise He described the Congress as unclean thing Some Englishmen accused the Indian National Congress of receiving the Russian gold Lord Elgin openly threatened the Indians in 1898 in these words India was conquered by the sword by the sword it shall be held

The British officials relied upon the policy of divide and rule to weaken the nationalist movement They encouraged Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, Raja Shiv Prasad and other pro-British Indians to start an anti-Congress movement They tried to drive a wedge between the Hindus and Muslims They fanned

communal rivalries among the educated Indians on the question of jobs in Government service

Achievements of the moderates

If we critically evaluate the work of the Moderates, it appears that they did not achieve much success Very few of the reforms advocated by them were carried out The foreign rulers treated them with contempt After more than 20 years of more or less futile agitation for concessions and redress of grievances, they hid received stones in place of bread The Moderates failed to acquire any roots among the common people and even those who joined the Congress with high hopes, were feeling more and more disillusioned The politics of the Moderates were described as "halting and halfhearted " Their methods were described as those of mendicancy or beggary through prayers and petitions

The Moderates failed to keep pace with the yearnings and aspirations of the people They failed to understand and appreciate the impatience of the people who were suffering under the foreign yoke They did not realise that the political and economic interests of the Indians and the British clashed and consequently the British people could not be expected to give up their rights and privileges in India without a fight Moreover, it was during this period that a movement started among the Muslims to keep away from the Congress and that ultimately resulted in the establishment of Pakistan In spite of their best efforts, the Moderates were not able to win over the Muslims

It is wrong to say that the political record of the Moderates was a barren one Taking into consideration the difficulties they had to confront with at that time, the Moderates achieved a lot It is their achievements in the wider sense that led later on to the more

advanced stages of the nationalist movement The Moderates represented the most aggressive forces of the time They made possible a decisive shift in Indian politics They succeeded in creating a wide political awakening and in amusing among the middle and lower middle class Indians and the intelligentsia the feeling that they belonged to one common nation They made the people of India conscious of the bonds of common political, economic and cultural interests and the existence of a common enemy and thus helped to weld them into a common nationality They popularised among the people the ideas of democracy and civil liberty They did pioneering work in mercilessly exposing the true character of British imperialism in India Even though they were moderate in politics and political methods, they successfully brought to light the most important political and economic aspects of the Indian reality that India was being ruled by a foreign power for economic exploitation The agitation of the Moderates in the economic field completely undermined the moral foundations of British rule in India

This was the seed-time of Indian nationalism The Moderates sowed the seeds well and deep They evolved a common political and economic programme which united the different sections of the people In spite of their many failures, they laid strong foundations for the national movement to grow upon and they deserve a high place among the makers of modern India We are at a stage of the country's progress which our achievements are bound to be small, and our disappointments frequent and trying That is the place which it has pleased Providence to assign to us in this struggle, and our responsibility is ended when we have done the work which belongs to that place It will, no doubt, be given to our

countrymen of future generations to serve India by their successes we, of the present generation, must be content to serve tier mainly by our failures For, hard though it be our of those failures the strength will come which in die end will accomplish great tasks The minds of the people have been familiarised with the idea of a united India working for her salvation, a national public opinion has been created close bonds of sympathy now knit together the different province, castes and creeds hamper less and less the pursuit of common aims, the dignity of a consciousness of national existence has spread over the whole land Above all there is a general perception now of the goal towards which we have to strive and a wide recognition of the arduous character of the struggle and the immense sacrifices it requires

The surat split

In 1907, there was a split in the Congress and the Moderates parted company with the Extremists That split was due to many causes The Moderates had controlled the Congress from its very beginning and even now they were in control of it They had their own ways of thinking and doing which were not acceptable to the younger generation who were impatient with the speed at which the Moderates were moving and leading the nation Under the circumstances, a confrontation between the two was inevitable and that actually happened in 1907

There were fundamental differences between the Moderates and he Extremists on the question of loyalty to the English throne and the continuance of British rule in India The Moderates believed fit loyalty to the English throne, They also believed that the continuance of the British rule was in the interests of the people of India The view of the Extremists Was

that the British rule in India was a curse and the question of loyalty to the English throne did not arise at all Another difference between the two was regarding the emphasis on the ultimate goal as well as the actual form of ultimate goal The Moderates believed in a policy of conciliation and compromise They were satisfied with the small concessions given by the British Government from time to time A little representation here and a few jobs there were enough to satisfy them They stood for self-government for India in the same way as the position of the British dominions like Canada and Australia was The Extremists did not bother about the petty concessions given by the British Government They did not care for the petty reforms which they considered to be merely palliatives and not the final remedy According to the Extremists, Swaraj alone was the final remedy They considered instalments of constitutional reforms as mere local applications

The Moderates believed in adopting strictly constitutional methods for agitation and that also of the feeblest type, so that there was not the slightest chance of any violence They believed in reasoned and emotional appeals, lucid presentation of tire case irresistible statements of facts, irrefutable arguments and presenting petitions We delegates meet together to present our Petition of Rights, out Grand Remonstrance, our appealand our prayer A C Mazumdar considered the right of petition to be the highest privilege of a nation The Moderates were not prepared to resort to a policy of noncooperation or passive resistance They did not accept even the programme of Swadeshi wholeheartedly They considered boycott as a vindictive act which was liable to create feeling of ill-will On the other hand, the Extremists were convinced that constitutional

agitation will lead them nowhere They believed that constitutional methods could not cut ice against the autocratic rule of a foreign nation They also believed that the Government of India would not allow even peaceful propaganda to go on and would intervene at every step to hinder and stop the progress of the nationalist movement They believed that the national problems could not be solved by resorting to arguments, ethics and piety and only a vigorous agitation could meet the needs of the situation They believed in a policy of passive resistance Which could make the government of India impossible

Another point of difference between the Moderates and the Extremists was with regard to their approach and strategy, Under the Moderates, tire Congress movement was not a popular movement It had no touch with the masses As a matter of fact, the Moderates depended for their success on the goodwill and sympathy of the Englishmen They worked on the hypothesis that if the grievances of the people of India were brought to the notice of the Englishmen, the same would be redressed The Extremists rejected such an approach, They believed that the people of India were the masters of their own destiny and not any foreign power Another point of difference between the Moderates and the Extremists was regarding the fitness of Indians to rule themselves without depending upon the British Government The Moderates believed that the people of India were still not fit for self-government However, the Extremists believed that the people of India were fit to rule themselves and self-government could not be denied to them on the ground of their unfitness

Another point of difference between the Moderates and the Extremists was that while the Moderates believed that they would get who they

asked for without any sufferings the Extremists were of the definite view that the salvation of India was not possible without sufferings and self-sacrifice

On account of these differences, there were clashes between the Moderates and the Extremists even during the 19th century However, events during the Viceroyalty of Lord Curzon aggravated matters There is no denying the fact that the Moderates were as much vehement in their denunciation of the partition of Bengal as the Extremists, but they hail their own limitations and could not go beyond them The Congress passed resolutions on boycott, Swadeshi and national education in 1906 but there was opposition from the Moderates The result was that some of them were shouted down by the audience The Moderates did not approve of all that happened at the Calcutta session in 1906 and tried to undo the same at the next session of the Congress in 1907 at Surat This Extremists were not prepared to allow them Under the circumstances, an open clash between them was inevitable When the Congress met on 21 December 1907, the atmosphere was surcharged and there were all kinds of rumours The name of Dr Rash Behari Ghose was proposed for the Presidentship When Surendranath Banerjee got up to second the proposal, attempts were made to shout him down and pandemonium prevailed in the Pandal The meeting had to be adjourned On the next day Dr Chose was elected the President, but when he got up to deliver his Presidential address Tilak ascended the plaltform stood in front of the President and demanded that he be allowed to address the audience He refused to submit to the ruling of the Chair that he could not be allowed to address at that stage While this tussle was going on, the rank and file of the Extremists created trouble and there were clashes, All efforts to persuade

Tilak failed He stood with folded hands and refused to go to his seat unless be was bodily removed Some persons from Nagpur and Poona rushed to the platform with Lathis in their hands A shoe was hurled from the audience and it struck Pherozeshah Mehta Pandemonium prevailed Chairs were thrown at the dais and sticks were freely used The session had to be suspended

On 28 December 1907, a Convention of the Moderates was held in the Congress pandal from which the Extremists were excluded although some of them were willing to sign the necessary declaration Those who did not wish to go back from the position taken at the Calcutta Congress met at a separate place to consider what steps were to be taken to continue the work of the Congress It was in this way that the Surat Session of the Congress ended Afteh the Surat fiasco, it was clear that the Moderates were not prepared to yield to the Extremists They knew that once the plant of extremism was planted, it was bound to grow They were not prepared for any compromise Tilak was ridiculed, abused and called a traitor In spite of the attacks from the Moderates, Tilak was prepared to accommodate them He wanted the Moderates and the Extremists to unite work of the Indian National Congress

Their contention was that they had no intention to drop or alter the resolutions passed at the Calcutta Session of the Congress What they intended to do was merely to modify or to use such words in those resolutions which would save them from chances of mis-construction However such a contention cannot be accepted A critical study of the relevant record shows that what the Moderates intended to do was not only to save the Calcutta resolutions from misconstruction but also to reconstruct them with a view to watering

them down If that had not been so, the Moderates would have reaffirmed the Calcutta resolutions in their Madras Session held in 1908, but that was not done At the Madras Session, the resolution on boycott was entirely dropped Instead of national education, the Moderates merely talked about supplementing the existing institutions and the efforts of the Government In 1906, the Congress had declared Swaraj or self-government, not only as their final goal but also demanded immediate steps leading to it At the Madras Session, the Congress expressed deep and general satisfaction at the reform proposals formulated in Lord Morley's Despatch

At the Calcutta Session in 1906, the Moderates had accepted the resolutions on Swaraj, national education, boycott and Swadeshi on account of the pressure brought on them from all quarters In their hearts, they did not accept the new resolutions Their fear was that the growing pace of the national struggle might lead to lawlessness and that would provide the British with an excuse to deny the reforms on the one hand and to crush all political activity on the other They had no self-confidence They did not believe that sustained and dignified national struggle was possible and desirable, They considered the Extremists irresponsible persons who were likely to put in danger the future of the country, The British Government also tried to win over the Moderates against the Extremists There were frequent meetings between the Moderate leaders and the Viceroy before the Surat split While the Extremists were roughly handled by the Government, the Moderates were shown all the favours, Lala Lajpat Rai, Sardar Ajit Singh, Tilak and many leaders, of Bengal were deported Public meetings were held all over the country to condemn the action of the Government In Bombay the

protesting crowd clashed with the military and police and many were killed However, there was no word of condemnation by the Moderates On the other hand, the Moderate Congress President observed thus in 1908 at the Madras Congress Session The clouds are now breaking The time of the singing of the birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land

It cannot be denied that the Surat split not only weakened the Indian National Congress, but it virtually destroyed its effectiveness till the Lucknow Session in 1916 For the next 8 years, India's nationalist movement remained a house divided against itself, half constitutional and half revolutionary in aspirations

Militant nationalism

Many factors were responsible for the rise of extremism in the Congress The Indian Council Act 1892 did not satisfy the aspirations of even the Moderates It was contended that the policy of appeals and prayers had brought forth no result The Government of India considered that policy as a sign of weakness To quote Tilak, Political rights will have to be fought for The Moderates think that these can be won by persuasion We think that they can only be obtained by strong pressure The constant economic drain on the resources of the country due to, foreign domination added to the discontentment in the country The writings of men like Dinshaw Wacha, R C Dutt and Dadabbai Naoroji proved that the impoverishment of the people of India was due largely to the deliberate policy of the British Government The policy of the Government of India sacrificed the industries of India in the interests of British manufacturers There seemed to be no prospects for Indian industries

Another cause was the discontent created by the outbreak of famine in 1897 It affected about 20 million people and 70,000 square miles of Indian territory The attitude of the Government of India was rather unhappy While the people were in the grip of famine the Government was busy celebrating the Diamond jubilee Celebrations of Queen Victoria The money which was required for the relief of the people was being wasted on needless celebrations This was interpreted as an attitude of callousness on the part of the Government

The outbreak of the Bubonic Plague in Bombay Presidency also added to the discontentment among the people It is true that the Government of India adopted certain measures to check the spread of the disease but the methods adopted by it were unfortunate, No consideration was shown for the sentiments of the people Mr Rand, the Plague Commissioner of Poona, was most ruthless in his operations Such a state of affairs could not be tolerated by the people and no wonder the plague polity of the Government was attacked vigorous, by the critics of the Government, particularly by Tilak The resentment was so great that Mr Rand and one of his associates were shot dead when they were returning from the Government House at Bombay after taking part in the jubilee Celebrations of Queen Victoria

The exclusion of the intelligentsia of India from all the big jobs in the country created bitterness The anti-Indian policy of Lord Curzon added to the discontentment The highest ranks of civil employment must, as a general rule, be held by Englishmen He emphasised that it was only the Englishmen who by their birth and training were fit to rule India, and not the Indians According to him, Providence had selected the Englishmen to rule over India and to give freedom

to India was against the will of God Such a theory of divine right to rule could not be palatable to the Indians who were learning to demand the right to govern themselves Lord Curzon was a bureaucrat par excellence and he put the greatest emphasis on efficiency He had no sympathy with the aspirations of the people of India As a matter of fact, he ignored them altogether He acted unmindful of the reactions of the people He regarded the administration as a machine and acted only in the interests of the efficiency of the machine, although the people were adversely affected by the machine His reign was full of "missions, omissions and commissions"

In 1899, he passed the famous Calcutta Corporation Act which completely officialised the Calcutta Corporation The total number of the members of the Calcutta Corporation was reduced from 75 to 50 The 25 members who were eliminated were those persons who were the representatives of the People of Calcutta The result of this measure was that there was a European majority in the Corporation No wonder, the measure was vehemently condemned In 1904 was passed the Indian Universities Act This law reduced the size of the Syndicates, Senates and Faculties with a view to giving prominence to the Europeans The result of this law was that the Indian Universities became the most officialised universities in the world They were practically left with no autonomy In 1904 was also passed the famous Official Secrets Act The definition of the term "sedition" was widened The Official Secrets Acts of 1889 and 1898 related to the disclosure of only military secrets The Act of 1904 covered also the official secrets relating to the civil affairs and newspaper, criticism which were likely to bring the government into contempt

Partition of Bengal

His most controversial measure was the partition of Bengal in 1905 which led to widespread agitation not only in Bengal but also in other parts of India The Government published its official scheme for the Partition of Bengal on 20 July 1905 There was violent agitation against it It was suggested that all Honorary Magistrates, Municipal Commissioners and members of District Boards should resign in protest A national mourning for 12 months was also advocated Seditious leaflets were printed and circulated among the people When the agitation was as its height, Lord Curzon resigned as Viceroy on account of his differences with the British Government, However, the necessary legislation to give to the partition of Bengal was rushed through the Legislative Council in September 1905 in order to make sure that the partition became a, settled fact before he left India 16 October 1905 was the day fixed for the coming into force of the partition and after a month, Lord Curzon felt India

16 October 1905 was declared to be a day of national mourning throughout Bengal It wag observed as a day of fasting There was a Hartal in Calcutta, People went to the Ganges barefooted in the early hours of the morning and took their bath Rabindranath Tagore composed a national song for this occasion The song was sung by huge crowds parading the streets There were cries of Bande Mataram which became a national song of Bengal The ceremony of Raksha Bandhan was observed on 16 October 1905

The leaders of Bengal felt that mere demonstrations, public meetings and resolutions were not enough and something more concrete was needed and the answer was Swadeshi and boycott Mass

meetings were held all over Bengal and big crowds took the oath of Swadeshi Patients refused to take foreign medicines and were willing to take the consequences , People burnt foreign clothes and foreign cigarettes Large sums were collected to help the Swadeshi movement Many textile mills soap and match factories national banks and insurance companies were started A prominent part was played by the students of Bengal in the Swadeshi agitation They picketed the shops selling foreign cloth and other foreign, goods Women also joined processions and picketed the shops dealing in foreign goods The programmes of Swadeshi And boycott went hand in hand

The leaders of Bengal took up the work of national education in right earnest National educational institutions were opened by them and literary, technical and physical education was given there On 15 August 1906 a National Council of Education was set up and Aurobindo Ghose was appointed the first Principal of the National College

The Government of the new province tried to suppress the anti-partition agitation with a heavy hand Meetings were broken and political leaders were insulted and threatened Gorkha soldiers were let loose on the people B Fuller, Lieutenant-Governor of the new province, went out of his way to insult the people Brutal repression took its heaviest toll at Barisal in East Bengal where the Provincial Council was disbanded on the strict orders of the Lieutenant-Governor When the local leaden and the people protested they were mercilessly battoned on the chests and backs Many were killed on the spot and hundreds of them were severely injured The Lieutenant-Governor of the new province warned the Hindus that they would be thrown 500 years back and barred from

Government service for 3 to 4 generations Students were sent to jail for throwing away sweets made of foreign sugar Gorkha soldiers were ordered to stop the singing of Bande Mataram by the people Shopkeepers were ordered to supply the needs of the Gorkhas even if they did not pay for them Orders were issued to stop the grants-in-aid to the educational institutions suspected of being against the Government Disciplinary actior against the teachers and professors was threatened

In its earlier stages, the anti-partition movement was led by the Moderates but they were disheartened when Lord Morley, Secretary of State for India, declared that the partition was a settled fact which would not be changed At this stage, the militant nationalists or the Extremists came to the fore and gave a call for passive resistance in addition to Swadeshi and boycott They called upon the people to non-cooperate with the Government and boycott the Government schools and colleges, courts and Government offices Their programme was to make the administration under present conditions impossible by an organised refusal to do anything which shall help either the British commerce in the exploitation of the country or British officialdom in the administration of it unless and until the conditions are changed in the manner and to the extent demanded by the people The question of partition of Bengal got merged with the question of India's freedom The Extremists called upon the people to offer sacrifices at the altar of the Motherland In 1907, Lala Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh were deported from the Punjab In 1908, Tilak was arrested and sentenced to 6 years imprisonment Chidambaram Pillai in Madras and Harisarvottan Rao and others in Andhra were put behind the bars Aurobindo Ghose was arrested and prosecuted and

although acquitted, he retired to Pondicherry There was a lot of discontentment and bitterness in the country This state of affair was allowed to continue

Lord Minto was succeeded by Lord Hardinge and he and Marquis of Crew who was then Secretary of State for India, decided to take steps to pacify Indian resentment over the partition of Bengal At the Delhi Durbar held in 1911 the King and Queen and the Secretary of State for India were present The occasion was taken advantage of to announce the cancellation of the partition of Bengal

The treatment of the Indians abroad also created resentment in the country The Government of India had encouraged Indian labourers to British colonies and had given them big promises regarding their future The Indians here responsible for the development of Kenya, Uganda, Fiji, Mauritius, Trinidad and South Africa In spite of their services, the Indians were despised, insulted and degraded Their privileges were withdrawn They were excluded from trade and were treated as intruders They could not purchase property and could not vote They were required to give their thumb impressions and carry identity cards They were forced to travel in separate third class railway compartments They were driven out of tram cars and kept out of the hotels They were not allowed to sit in public parks They were required to walk only on the footpaths and live outside the towns in places set apart for them They were required to put off lights and go to bed after 9 p m They were "spat upon, hissed, cursed, abused and subjected to a variety of other indignities "

Certain international events also had their repercussions in India The rise of Japan after 1968 proved that even a backward Asian country could

develop herself without Western control The defeat of Italy by Abyssinia and Russia by Japan exploded the myth of European superiority This was interpreted as a harbinger of the rise of the East The Indians could take inspiration from those events It was felt that if the European nations could be defeated by an Asiatic power, it was also possible for the Indians to drive away the Englishmen from their country

The growth of education in India increased the influence of Western ideas of democracy, nationalism and radicalism The educated Indians became the strongest advocates of militant nationalism, The treatment given to them by the foreigners added to their bitterness They were low paid Many of them were unemployed They felt very strongly the foreign domination There was a feeling in the country that self-government was necessary for the economic, political and cultural advancement of the country

Leaders like Tilak and B C Pal preached the message of self-respect and asked the nationalists to rely on the character and capacities of the Indian people They called upon the people to build their own future by their own efforts They advocated agitation and mass action They had no faith in the efficacy of constitutional methods They believed that prayers, petitions and protests were not going to convince the British Government whose only object was to exploit the people of India with a view to add to their own prosperity To quote Tilak, "Protests are of no avail Mere protes's not backed by self-reliance will not help the people Days of protests and prayers have gone " Again, Prepare your forces, organise your power and then go to work so that they cannot refuse you what you demand

The methods of the Extremists were boycott,

Swadeshi and national education Boycott was directed primarily against the foreign goods but it also included the boycott of the Government services, honours and titles About the methods of the Extremists We desire to turn our faces away from the Government Houses and turn them to the huts of the people We want to stop our mouth so far as an appeal to the Government is concerned and open our mouth with a new to the masses of our people This is the psychology, this is the I this is the spiritual significance of the boycott movement Both the boycott and Swadeshi movements were a great success

In his whirlwind tour of the country, Tilak declared that the Moderates could not deliver the goods and the people should look up to the Extremists for the liberation of their Motherland The repetition of the resolutions full of prayers to the Government could not bring any result The remedy was not petitions but boycott After the Surat session, Tilak had no rest Single-handed, he started a manysided struggle and spread the fire of patriotism in every nook and corner of the Bombay Presidency , He went on tours and collected a lot of money for the various national causes He asked his audiences to work for Swaraj and get ready for sufferings which alone could bring Swaraj His slogan at the meetings was "Swarajya is my birthright, I will have it"

The Government of India passed tire Public Meetings Act, the Criminal Law Act, the Seditious Meetings Act, 1907, the Explosive Substances Act, 1908, tire Newspaper Act, 1908 and tire Indian press Act, 1910 to take effective action against the Extremists, Several circulars and ordinances were issued which had the effect of abrogating the right of free speech and criticism, Processions, meetings and demonstrations were banned Students and citizens

were prohibited from taking part in politics The student who defied the orders were rusticated from their schools and colleges Many leaders were deported from Bengal alone Tilak was arrested, sentenced to imprisonments for 6 years and kept in Burma in "virtual solitary confinement in a prison cell " Lala Lajpat Rai and Sardar Ajit Singh were arrested in the Punjab and sent to Burma Aurobindo Ghose was kept in jail for a year awaiting his trial although he was aquitted by the court Madan Lal Dhingra was hanged, Bhupendra Nath Datta, Editor of the Yugantar, was given a long sentence of imprisonment The Yugantar, the 'Sandhya' and 'Bande-Mataram' were suppressed, Police raids, house searches, confiscations and espionage became the order of the day C I D officers were let loose upon society So great was the repression that Lord Morley had to ask Lord Minto to have more restraint

As regards their achievements, the militant nationalists added a glorious chapter of the history of the nationalist movement They clarified its objectives, taught people self-confidence and self-reliance and prepared tire social base of the movement to include the lower middle classes, students, youth and women New methods of political organisation and new modes of waging political struggles were introduced

However, the mass of the common people, the workers and the peasants, were still outside the mainstream of national politics The Yugantar wrote thus on 22 April 1906 after the Barisal Conference "The remdey lies with the people themselves The thirty crores of People inhabiting India must raise, their sixty crores of hands to stop this course of oppression Force must be stopped by force "

The home rule movement

When Great Britain was involved in the First World War, Indian leaders like Tilak and Annie Besant decided to put new life in the national movement in the country As the Englishmen did not like the word Swaraj and considered the same to be "seditious and dangerous," Tilak decided to use the term "Home Rule" in place of Swaraj as the goal of his movement In December 1915, he had deliberations with his colleagues an on 28 April 1916 the Indian Home Rule League was set up with its headquarters at Poona The object of this League was to "attain Home Rule or self-government within the British Empire by all constitutional means and to educate and organise public opinion in the country towards the attainment of the same " A similar Home Rule League was founded by Annie Besant on 15 September 1916 with its headquarters at Adyar near Madras

The advocates of the Home Rule Movement believed in constitutional methods and were opposed to violence and revolutionary agitation They had no desire to embarrass the Government which was fighting against Germany and Austria Hungary They were prepared to offer their cooperation to the British Government so that it could win the war However, they believed that the grant of Home Rule to India was in the interests of the British Empire in its war against Germany and Austria as she could then fight with greater moral force

In 1917, the two Home Rule Leagues of Tilak and Annie Besant worked in co-operation with each other Tilak confined his activities to the Bombay Presidency and the Central Provinces and the rest of India was left to Annie Besant The branches of the Home Rule League were set up all over the country and there was a popular demand for Home Rule

Tilak went on a whirlwind tour of the country in 1916 and appealed to the people to unite under the banner of the Home Rule League His target was not the British Empire or the Emperor of India but the bureaucracy in India In his public speeches, he declared emphatically that Home Rule was the only cure for India's political ills and grievances, that liberty was the birthright of every man and that the aspiration to get one's liberty was tire essence of human nature A small minority from outside India could not be allowed to rule the country arbitrarily

Annie Besant also toured the country and created a lot of enthusiasm among the people for the national cause Her articles in the Common weal and New India were very popular Annie Besant stirred the country by the spoken as well as the written word, as scarcely as any one else could do Annie Besant's work was particularly among the women of India who showed uncalculating heroism, endurance and the selfless sacrifice of the feminine nature

The British Government could not be expected to keep quiet in the face of a stir created by the Home Rule Leagues and their leaders and it decided to curb the activities of those leaders who Were in the forefront of the movement The existing statutes were tightened, There was already an ordinance to prevent the entry of undesirable aliens into India The Defence of India Act 1915 superseded the ordinary criminal law of the country and action under it could be taken against agitators The provisions of the Indian Press Act 1910 were strictly enforced to stop the propaganda of the Home Rule Leaguers Circulars were issued by which the students of schools and colleges were forbidden from taking part in the Home Rule Movement In July 1916, Tilak was prosecuted, for delivering seditious speeches and was ordered to

furnish a bond of Rs 20,000 Externment orders were served on him and he ordered not to enter Delhi and the Punjab Similar action taken against Annie Besant She was ordered to furnish security for her press and the Commonweal and New India In all, she deposited 20,000 and the whole of that amount was forfeited by the Government The Government also took action against Annie Besant and her two associates, B P Wadia and G S Arundale The Governor of Madras called Annie Besant for an interview and told her that she was to be interned There was a lot of indignation all over the country against her internment Protest meetings were held all over the country and the repression by the police was condemned

Revolutionary and terrorist movement causes

Many factors were responsible for the rise and growth of the revolutionary and terrorist movement in the country, The rising of 1857 had its effect on the future generations of India The sacrifices made by the Indians on that occasion gave inspiration to many to follow their example The spirit of revenge with which the rebel of 1857 were crushed and even the innocent Indians were massacred by the British soldiers even after the failure of the revolt inflamed the minds of many Indians There was a general awakening in the country and the people started thinking in terms of ending the foreign rule at any cost even if the use of force was necessary for that purpose The timidity of the Moderates exasperated the youth of India and they decided to take to violence to turn out the foreigners from the country The Indian press was instrumental in putting the Indian case before the people and asked for action against British tyranny in the country The minds of the Indians were also affected by the large number of political assassinations in Europe at the hands of the anarchists The murderer of the Empress

of Austria-Hungary is stated to declared Long live anarchy I Let there be only 200 such brave men as myself and all the thrones of the world will be empty All these murders took place a few years before the partition of Bengal in 1905 and naturally their effect on the youth was bound to be profound The unification of Germany and Italy, the defeat of Italy by Abyssinia in 1896 and of Russia by Japan in 1904, the Nihilist Movement in Russia and the Young Turk Movement in Turkey had their effect on the revolutionaries in India Many people in India were convinced that the British rule in India could not be ended by constitutional methods and force had to be employed for that purpose These revolutionaries believed in the philosophy of bomb and pistol in one hand and the Gita in the other

Maharashtra

Tilak played an important part in furthering the cause of revolutionary movement in Maharashtra In 1895, he inaugurated the Shivaji and Ganpati festivals By doing so, he gave a religious sanction to the movement against the British Government These festivals became the spring boards of revolutionary enterprises Fiery speeches were delivered on these occasions At the Shivaji Coronation Festival held on 12 June 1897 Tilak called upon the people to "rise above the Penal Code into the rarified atmosphere of the sacred Bhagwat Gita" He justified the murder of Afzal Khan by Shivaji and observed, "If thieves enter our house and we have no strength to drive them out, should we not without hesitation shut them in and bum them alive? God has conferred on the Molechhas no grant of Hindustan inscribed on imperishable brass"

Towards the end of 1996, there was a severe famine in the Deccan and Tilak started a no-rent

campaign He called upon the peasants not to pay land-revenue to the Government In 1897 occurred the plague and Mr Rand was murdered Tilak was arrested and sentenced to 18 months rigorous imprisonment There was a lot of political activity in Maharashtra There were Shivaji clubs, anti-cow-killing societies, Ganpati choirs, national festivals, gymnastic clubs, etc, Poona, Nasik, Kolhapur and Bombay were the centres of these activities The statue of Queen Victoria was mutilated at Bombay An attempt was made to burn the Church Mission Hall The Marathi press was revolutionary, in tone The editors of many newspapers and magazines were arrested and sentenced Tilak himself was arrested in 1908, prosecuted and convicted and sentenced to 6 years transportation

Ganesh Damodar Savarkar, the younger brother of V D Savarkar, was the head of the revolutionary activities at Nasik, He was the founder of Abhinav Bharat Society In April 1907 he printed 7,000 copies of the Marathi version of the autobiography of Mazzini In 1909, he published a pamphlet which contained many inflammatory verses In one of the poems he said "Take tip the sword and destroy the Government because it is foreign and aggressive " The title of another poem was "Who obtained independence without a battle?" He was prosecuted and sentenced to transportation for life with forfeiture of property

V D Savarkar had sent a parcel containing 20 Browning automatic pistols with ammunition to Bombay concealed in the false bottom of a box forming part of the luggage of one Chaturbhuj Amin who was working as a cook in the India House The pistols were to be used by the members of the Abhinav Bharat Society Before the parcel reached India, Ganesh had already been arrested The members, of the Abhinav

Bharat Society decided to murder Jackson, District Magistrate of Nasik, as he had convicted Ganesh Savarkar, Jackson was actually shot dead on 21 December 1909 The details of the Nasik conspiracy were divulged by one Ganu Vaidya who was a member of the Nasik Branch of Abhinav Bharat Society Acting on the information supplied by him, the police rounded up 37 youngmen, 3 of whom were hanged and the rest were sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment

Mr Jackson had arrested Ganesh Savarkar on the instigation of Sir Curzon Willie who had laid a ring of spies around the India House to watch the activities of the Indian students He also dictated the British policies concerning India He was shot dead on 1 July 1909 by Madan Lal Dhingra

Bengal

In addition to Maharashtra, the revolutionary movement was also strong in Bengal The revolutionaries of Bengal came from the educated classes The work done by Bankim Chandra Chatterji, Ram Krishna Paramhans, Swami Vivekananda, Raj Narain Bose and Nabagopal Mitra had its effect Unemployment among the educated classes in Bengal the situation intolerable Things were made worse by the Anti-Bengalee attitude of the English officials who refused to recruit Bengalees in Government service The Government advertisements contained the following words "Bengalee Baboos need not apply" This was bound to have, its repercussions In order to reduce the influence of the Bengalees, Lord Curzon partitioned Bengal in 1905 The people of Bengal who had fought against the European Indigo planters with their fishpears and bamboo clubs, were not going to be cowed down and they accepted the challenge

On 23 December 1907, Mr Allen, who was formerly the District Magistrate of Dacca, was shot in the back but the injury did not prove fatal On 30 April 1908, Mrs Kennedy and Miss Kennedy were killed by a bomb thrown by Khudi Ram which was actually meant for Mr Kingsford, Presidency Magistrate Khudi Ram was arrested, tried and hanged, He became a martyr and a hero Schools were closed for 2 or 3 days as a tribute to his memory His photographs had in immense sale, Youngmen began to wear Dhoties with the name of Khudi Ram woven into their borders

In the Alipore conspiracy case searches were made by the police at Maniktala and other places In May 1908, bombs, dynamite, cartridges, and correspondence were seized Many persons were arrested, charged and convicted Heavy punishments were inflicted on them Narindey Gosain became an approver but he was shot dead by his companions in the jail Nand Lal, the Sub-Inspector who had arrested Khudi Ram, was murdered Asutosh Biswas who had acted as public prosecutor in the Gosain murder case and the Alipore conspiracy case was shot dead, Shams-ul Alam, Deputy Superintendent of Police who was connected with the Alipore case, was shot dead

The Punjab

The Punjab also played its part in the revolutionary movement The Punjabis detested the policy of repression followed by the Government of India They also protested against the treatment given to them in various parts of the British empire and the failure of the British Government to protect them Sardar Ajit Singh, a revolutionary of the Bharat Mata Society of Lahore, took an active part against the Colonisation Act which deprived the peasants of Lyallpur and other

districts of the fruits of the lands which they had converted from barren areas into rich fields He addressed many meetings which began with the song of Banke Dayal known as "Pagri Samblial Oh ! Jatta," There were disturbances in Rawalpindi it, May 1907 and many Arya Samaj leaders were arrested and prosecuted

On 23 December 1912, Lord Hardinge was taken in a procession on the back of an elephant in Delhi When the people were showering flowers and coconuts on the procession in Chandni, Chowk, a bomb exploded which injured the Viceroy and killed his A D C The procession was turned into a funeral The bomb was thrown by Rash Behari Bose He was a lot of Confusion and Rash Behari managed to escape A reward of Rs 7,500 was announced for the arrest of Rash Behari Bose He was chased from place to place but every time he managed to escape He went away to Japan under a fictitious name He played an important role in organising the Indian National Army in Japan He died in 1945

The action taken by the Government in this connection is known as the Delhi conspiracy case 13 persons were arrested in that connection and among them were Master Amir Chand, Dina Nath, Bhai Balmukand, Balraj Bhalla, Basant Kumar and Avadh Behari Two of them were sentenced to 7 years imprisonment and of them were hanged Dina Nath became an approver It is stated that when Avadh Behari was going to be hanged, an Englishman asked him what his last wish was and his reply was "The end of the British rule," When the Englishman advised him to die peacefully, he replied, "Peace! I wish that a conflagration may break out in the country gutting the British rule Let my country emerge out of this fire like pure gold "

The Ghadar party

The Ghadar Party was determined to wage war against the British in India and with that object in view decided to send arms and men to India to start a revolt with the help of soldiers and local revolutionaries, Several thousand men volunteered to go back to India Millions of dollars were collected for that purpose The Ghadarites contacted Indian soldiers in the Far East, South-East Asia and all over India and persuaded many regiments to revolt 21 February 1915 was fixed for an all-India revolt and vigorous preparations were made for that purpose Rash Behari Bose, Sachindra Sanyal, Ganesh Pingale and Baghi Kartar Singh prepared a master plan for that purpose Some revolutionaries were killed and several others were arrested They were also hanged The All-India revolt failed because one Kirpal Singh passed on all the secret plans to the Government Many places were raided and bombs were recovered Secret papers were also captured by the Government Most of the ring leaders of the Punjab fell into the hands of the police The Ghadarites were tried in 9 batches in the Lahore Conspiracy Case and the supplementary Cases Out of 291 sent up for trial, 42 were sentenced to death and hanged and 114 were transported for life 93 were imprisoned for varying terms and 42 were acquitted Prominent leaders like Baghi Kartar Singh, Bhai Parmanand, Ganesh Pingale, Jagat Singh and Harnam Singh were also tried for conspiracy to overthrow the British Government Kartar Singh and Pingale admitted that they were wholly responsible for the conspiracy

The Tribunal announced its judgment on 13 September 1915 Bhai Parmanand was so indifferent to death that on that day, he slept till 8 in the morning When he woke up, he found everybody

around him laughing One of them asked him, "Why? Are you going to your in-laws?" These blessed souls sang sweet songs for the Motherland and at last they prayed this together for the last time "Oh Mother! We have not been able to snap your fetters If any one of us remains alive he will strive for your honour and the liberty and equality of Indian " 24 of them including Kartar Singh, Pingale, Bhai Parmanand, Jagat Singh and others were awarded death sentence On hearing that all of them began to dance Those who were condemned to transportation for life cried out "Give us death? Reward us with hanging !" Kartar Singh thanked the President Pingale said this much "So that's all!" The Viceroy commuted the death sentences of 17 to transportation for life Pingale was hanged on 16 November 1915 and he was the last to be hanged The Officer-in-charge told him "I tried to give you as much time for life as I could I kept your turn last " The reply of Pingale was "Then you have made a mistake, I've been Separated from my friends They may lose their faith in me Had you sent me earlier I would have got the privilege of arranging for their reception and comforts there Oh, you have deprived me of that good luck " He was questioned about his last desire and his reply was "Kindly remove my chains so that I can offer prayers to my Mother with the palms of my hands joined," When the chains were taken off, fie prayed aloud, "Lord, you know our heart's desire, Our only prayer is that you fulfil the mission for which we have so readily laid down our lives " It is stated that the Chief justice was inclined to commute the death sentence of Kartar Singh but the latter replied, "I prefer gallows to life sentence I wish I were born again to unfetter by Motherland I shall be glad to be hanged every time I am reborn till my country achieved independence"

Postwar movement

There was revival of the revolutionary and terrorist movement in the country when the people were suffering from a sense of frustration and pessimism after agitations and demonstrations against the Rowlatt Bills, the Non-co-operation movement and the Khilafat movement The revolutionaries put before the young men of the country a new programme They called upon them to start a revolutionary and uncompromising struggle for the independence of their country They tried to impress upon the people of India the secret of the British character that they could be bullied, but not argued into justice and generosity The terrorism of the Government was to be met by counter-terrorism Such a policy alone could restore self-confidence among the people who were suffering from a sense of titter helplessness The revolutionaries believed that the English masters and their hired lackeys should not be allowed to do whatever they liked, unhampered and unmolested and every possible difficulty and resistance must be thrown in their way Terrorism had an international bearing as, the attention of the enemies of England was drawn towards India through acts of terrorism and revolutionary demonstrations The terrorists made it clear that they did, not believe in terrorism for terrorism sake They resorted to it as an effective means of retaliation The revolutionaries believed that the repressive measures of the Government had destroyed all hopes of political reform being gained without violence Moreover, armed resistance against something "Satanic and ignoble" was infinitely more befitting for any nation than the prevalence of "effortless and philosophical cowardice " The revolutionaries went to the villages not to get votes but to secure "co-martyrs" for the country who would die without anybody knowing where their corpses lay

They would like to 90 down in history unknown, unhonoured, unsung, unlamented and unwept These "mad lovers" of the country were not actuated by avarice, rivalry, jealousy or enmity They were inspired by divine motive of devotion and service The revolutionaries were above sectarian and communal considerations Unlike the former movements, religion was not allowed to have precedence over the secular and nationalistic outlook of its organisers who belonged to different religious groups in the country The revolutionary brotherhood had reached a stage where there was no caste, no religion or even separate identity

There was a fundamental difference between the pre-1919 phase and post-1919 phase of the revolutionary movement, The pre-1919 revolutionaries were inspired by Mazzini and Garibaldi of Italy and the Sinn Feinners of Ireland The post 1919 revolutionaries derived their inspiration from the October Revolution of Russia and the socialistic principles of Soviet leaders like Lenin The slogans and code words like "Bharat' Mata Ki jai", "Bande Mataram", "Om", "Ram Hari", "Allaho Akbar" and "Sat Sri Akal" were substituted by "Inqilab Zindabad", Down with imperialism", "Long Live the Proletariat" and "Long Live India " A leaf, let issued by Naujawan Bharat Sabha discarded Buddha and Christ and described Karl Marx and Engels as the greatest men of the world While the old revolutionaries got their inspiration from the Bhagwat Gita and the writing of Aurobindo, Vivekananda and Bankint Chandra Chatterjee the new revolutionaries got their inspiration from the writings of Marx and Engels While the revolutionaries like Lala Hardayal and his followers thought in terms of the past glory of ancient India, Sardar Bhagat Singh and his comrades relied

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Kakori case

The revolutionaries were in great need of money for the manufacture of bombs and consequently a few revolutionaries boarded a train on 9 August 1925 on the Lucknow-Saharanpur line They had with them revolvers and cartridges, After the departure of the train from the Kakori railway station, one of the revolutionaries pulled the alarm chain of the train When the train stopped, the revolutionaries tried to take away money from the iron box which was broken open with great effort by the hammer blows given by Ashfaq Ullah Khan, However, the revolutionaries were able to get Rs, 5,000 only The Government took action and arrested about 40 persons The trial in the Kakori case concluded on 7 April 1927 It was a mere farce Pandit Ram Prasad Bismal, Roshan Singh and Rajendra Lahiri were given death sentence Manmath Nath Gupta got 14 years and many others got death sentences Ashfaq and Sachindra Nath Bakshi were caught later on and given death sentence and transporvion for life respectively

The Simon Commission visited Lahore on 20 October 1928 The Hindustan Socialist Republican Party took out a huge procession against the Simon Commission, under the leadership of Lala Lajpat Rai I P Saunders gave blows on the head and chest of Lajpat Rai and theory caused grievous injuries on his person As a result of those injuries Lajpat Rai died on 17 November, 1928 In order to have revenge, Sounders was mudered on 17 December, 1928 by Rai Guru and Bhagat Singh After the murder Bhagat Singh and Raj Guru managed to escape

On 8 April 1929, two bombs were thrown from the Visitors' gallery on the Central Assembly Hall in New Delhi by Bhagat Singh and B K Dutt They could have run away but Surrendered to the police Their

trial started on 7 May, 1929 and on 12 June, 1929, the Sessions Judge sentence them to transportation for life

In the Saunders murder case, the trial started at Lahore Bhagat Singh was taken from Delhi to Lahore to stand his trial for murder, alongwith others The tribunal which tried Bhagat Singh and his companions, gave its decision on 7 October, 1930 and Bhagat Singh, Raj Guru and Sukh Dev were sentenced to death They were hanged on 23 March 1931 at Lahore

Contribution of revolutionaries

It is true that the revolutionaries failed to bring about the independence of India However, it cannot be denied that they had made their own contribution to the national cause It is they who set an example before the Indians by sacrificing their own lives They taught the people not by precept but by personal example They taught them to face death and do everything for the sake of their country By their sacrifices they created a new spirit which helped the Indians later on to win their freedom It is they who revolted against the policy of the Moderates and thereby opened a new chapter in the history of the freedom movement in India Their desperate deeds, daring plans, cool action and indifference to death won for them a lasting place in the memory of the nation They succeeded in what they desired to do—evoking by the maximum sacrifices of the minimum chosen persons the spirit of minimum sacrifice on the part of the maximum number of people The impression which the revolutionaries left on the minds of the people was very effective and great They exhorted the people to live dedicated lives self-sacrifice for national emancipation, a feeling of service for the needy and the

oppressed and dislike for self-publicity The revolutionaries were the heroes who left their footprints on the sands of time

India and world war I (1914-18)

When the war started, there was great enthusiasm in the country, The people of India were willing to serve the government in every possible, way After Marne, there was an increasing demand for Indian troops out side India, When Turkey joined the Central Powers in October 1914, Indian troops garrisoned the Suez Canal and repulsed a Turkish attack, Indian troops fought through the long campaigns of Macedonia and German East Africa They played an important part in the Iraq campaign leading to the capture of Baghdad in 1917 In this way, they helped to found the present State of Iraq They were in the Allied army which took Jerusalem in 1917 All this involved a great effort in India itself Eight lakhs of men were recruited for the fighting forces, together with four lakhs of non-combatants This resulted in a great expansion in the Military machine, a great mixture of classes and a stronger feeling of self-confidence all around, Indian self-confidence grew when the magnitude of their effort and the extent to which it depended upon Indians themselves, were realised

In the administrative sphere, the British government made a mistake in allowing the British civilian officers, to serve the forces during the war, Many of them never returned and those who returned found themselves in a strange new mental world to which it was difficult to adapt themselves When times grew difficult towards the end of the war, the Government had only an ageing and tired cadre of officers to rely upon

In the economic sphere, the first effect of the war

was one of stimulus The industrial development of modern India owes a good deal to the demands of World War I However, increasing demands and expenditure led to rise in prices and ultimately enthusiasm was turned into discontent Englishmen could be expected to put up with inconveniences because they felt that they were fighting for their very existence and their victory was likely to add to their glory The same could not be said about the Indians for whom the War was merely an external affliction No doubt, they became not only exhausted and war-weary but also sour discontented and resentful

The attitude of India towards Europeans and its people was altered radically and permanently The Indians gave up the feeling that the Europeans were superior to them morally and technically They were regarded merely as more powerful The first War casualty in India was the image of Western superiority

The Russian Revolution of 1917 also had a profound influence on the minds of the Indians They felt that if the people of Russia could overthrow an imperialist regime, the same could be done by the Indians in their own country The Fourteen points of President Wilson had great influence on the Indians They also demanded the rights of national freedom and self-determination of peoples, No wonder, the Indians demanded self-government fit the name of the fundamental principles accepted by the Allied Powers

As regards the effect of war on Muslims, they were very unhappy They did not approve of the dimemberment of Turkey, which was regarded as the sword of Islam They also did not like the treatment given to the Arabs who were considered to be rebels against the Turkish Khalifa Their princes were

regarded as, stooge of the infidel When the war started, the Congress was still a middle-class, body of Westernised professionals with some commercial, and industrial backing It was firmly under the control of Gokhale and the Moderates However, all this was changed during the war Tilak came back from jail and became a leader of all-India importance Tilak was opposed to the old policy of making prayers to the British Government His contention was that every Indian had the birthright to be free He laid the foundations for the great anti-government movement led by Gandhiji in the next few years

Jallianwala Bagh tragedy

Great atrocities were committed in the Punjab during the regime of Sir Michael Dwyer, Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab Sir Michael was known as the iron man of the Punjab, He had no faith in political reforms and consequently had no sympathy with the political agitators He refused Tilak and B C Pal to enter the Punjab The methods adopted by Sir Michael to raise war loans and to find recruits were very often unauthorised and oppressive When the agitation against the Rowlatt Act started, Sir Michael gave on 7 April 1919 the following warning to the people of the Punjab The Government of this Province is and will remain determined that public order, which was maintained so successfully during the time of war, shall not be disturbed in times of peace Action has therefore, already been taken under the Defence of India Act against certain individuals at Lahore and Amritsar The recent puerile demonstrations against the Rowlatt Act in both Lahore and Amritsar indicate how easily the ignorant and the credulous people can be misled Those who only want to mislead them incur a serious responsibility Those who appeal to ignorance rather than to reason have a day of reckoning in store

for them Amritsar observed, Hartal peacefully both on 30 Match and 6 April However, on 9 April 1919, the Government of the Punjab passed orders for the deportation of Dr Satyapal and Dr Kitchlew and their internment at Dharmsala under the Defence of India Act On 10 April, 1919, they were removed by the police from Amritsar When the people came to know of it, complete Hartal was declared in the city The people marched in a procession to the residence of the Deputy Commissioner to demand the release of their leaders They had no sticks or lathis with them However, they were checked by the police at the railway level-crossing and there was firing This infuriated the mob and there was wholesale burning of whatever fell in their way Europeans were assaulted Buildings were burnt and godowns were looted When the troops appeared in the city, the mob disappeared On 11 April 1919, the people were allowed to arrange for the funerals of the dead bodies

On 12 April 1919, a proclamation was issued by General Dyer, who had taken charge of the troops the day before, that no meetings or gatherings of the people were to be held However, no steps were taken to see that the proclamation was brought to the notice of the people living in the various localities of the city The result was that it was announced on 12 April evening that there would be a public meeting on 1 April 1919 at 4-30 p m in the Jallianwala Bagh Neither General Dyer nor other authorities took any action to stop the meeting The meeting started at the right time and there were about 6,000 to 10,000 people present in the meeting All of them were practically urarmed and defence, less, The Jallianwala Bagh is closed practically on all sides by walls except one entrance General Dyer entered the Jallianwala Bagh with armoured cars and troops Without giving any

warning to the people to disperse, he ordered the troops to fire and he continued to do so till the whole of the ammunition at his disposal was exhausted, Hundreds of people were killed The contention of General Dyer was that he wanted to teach the people a lesson so that they might not laugh at him He would have fired and fired longer, he said, if he had the required ammunition, He had only fired 1,600 rounds because his ammunition had run out The regime of Dyer imposed some unthinkable punishments The water and electric supply of Amritsar were cut off Public flogging was common However, the "Crawling Order" was the worst of all

Non-co-operation movement

Under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, the Indian National Congress decided in 1920 to start the Non-Co-operation Movement It was truly a revolutionary step It was for the first time that the Congress decided to follow a policy of direct action Many factors were responsible for this change Mahatma Gandhi had so far believed in the justice and fairplay of the British Government He had given his full cooperation to the Government during the World War I in spite of opposition from men like Tilak However, the tragedy of the Jallianwala Bagh, the Martial Law in the Punjab and the findings of the Hunter Committee destroyed his faith in the good sense of the Englishmen He felt that the old methods must be given up After the withdrawal of the Moderates, the Extremists were in complete control of the Congress and, it for the Congress to adopt a revolutionary programme The terms of the Treaty of Sevres which was entered into between Turkey and were very severe and were resented by the Muslims of India The Muslims tried to persuade the British Government to show leniency towards Turkey but they got a flat

refusal That resulted in resentment among them against the British Government The Muslims started the Khilafat Movement and Mahatma Gandhi identified himself with them in that movement The result was that Mahatma Gandhi was sure of Muslim support if the Congress started the Non-Co-operation Movement

A special session of the Congress was held at Calcutta in September 1922 under the Presidentship of Lala Lajpat Rai and Mahatma Gandhi himself moved the non-co-operation resolution There was a lot of opposition particularly from C R Das, B C Pal, Annie Besant Jinnah and M M Malaviya but the resolution was carried by a majority of 1855 against 873 The programme of the Non-Co-operation Movement was dearly stated in the noncooperation resolution It involved the surrender of titles and honorary offices and resignation from nominated posts In the local bodies The non-co-operators were not to attend Government Levies, Darbars and other official and semiofficial functions held by the Government officials or in their honour They were to withdraw their children gradually from schools and colleges and establish national schools and colleges They were to boycott gradually the British courts and establish private arbitration courts They were not to join the army as recruits for service in Mesopotamia They were not to stand for election to the Legislatures and they were also not to vote They were to use Swadeshi cloth Hand-spinning and hand-weaving were to be encouraged Untouchability was to be removed as there could be no Swaraj without this reform Mahatma Gandhi promised Swaraj within one year if people followed his programme sincerely and whole-heartedly Ahimsa or non-violence was to be strictly observed by the non-co-operators They were not to give up Satya

or truth under any circumstances The Non-Co-operation Movement captured the imagination of the people Both the Hindus and Muslims participated in it There was wholesale burning of foreign goods Many students left schools and colleges and the Congress set up such national educational institutions as the Kashi Vidyapeeth, Banaras Vidyapeeth, Gujarat Vidyapeeth, Bihar Vidyapeeth, Bengal National University, National College of Lahore, Jamia Millia of Delhi and the National Muslim University of Aligarh Seth Jamna Lal Bajaj declared that he would give Rs one lakh a year for the maintenance of non-practising lawyers Forty lakh volunteers were enrolled by the Congress Twenty thousand 'Charkhas' were manufactured, The people started deciding their disputes by means of arbitration, Mahatma Gandhi gave up the title of Kaiser-i-Hind and his example was followed by others

Mahatma Gandhi was convinced that the only way to make the Government see reason was to start the civil disobedience movement and he decided to start the same in Bardoli The Congress Working Committee called upon the people of India to co-operate with the people of Bardoli "by refraining from mass or individual civil disobedience of an aggressive character, except upon the express consent of Mahatma Gandhi previously obtained " Mahatma Gandhi wrote to the Viceroy and gave 7 previously days to accept his demands The Viceroy held the Congress responsible for A the lawlessness in the country Mahatma Gandhi was left with no alternative but to launch the civil disobedience movement Unfortunately, sit this time, the tragedy of Chauri Chaura occurred which changed the course of Indian history What actually happened was that a mob of 3,000 persons killed 25 policemen and one inspector

Similar tragic events had already occurred on 17 November 1921 in Bombay and on 13 January 1922 in Madras! This was too much for Mahatma Gandhi who stood for complete nonviolence The result was that Mahatma Gandhi gave orders for the suspension of the Non-co-operation Movement at once The Government was not satisfied with this action of Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress It was feared that Mahatma Gandhi was out for a bigger trouble and consequently he was arrested or 13 March 1922 His trial began in Ahmedabad and he pleaded guilty He took upon himself full responsibility for the occurrences in Madras, Bombay and Chauri Chaura and told Mr Broomfield, the British judge, that he would "do the same again" if he was set free He was sentenced to 6 years imprisonment

The action of Mahatma Gandhi in suspending the movement was severely criticised from many quarters According to Dr Pattabhi Sita ramayya, "Long letters were written from behind the ban by Pt Motilal Nehru and Lala Lajpat Rai They took Gandhi to task for punishing the whole country for the sins of a place "

Dr R C Majumdar says that the most outstanding feature of the Non-co-operation movement was the willingness and ability of the people In general to endure hardships and punishments inflicted by the Government It is true that the movement collapsed but the memory of its greatness survived and was destined to inspire the nation to launch a more arduous campaign The movement served as a baptism of fire which initiated the people to a new faith and new hope and inspired them with a new confidence in their power to fight for freedom As a result of this movement, the Congress movement for the first time became a really mass movement The national awakening not only penetrated to the people at large

but also made them active participants in the struggle for freedom Moreover, the Indian National Congress was turned into a genuine revolutionary organisation It was no longer a deliberative assembly but an organised fighting party pledged to revolution

The Swarajist party

When C R Das and the other Bengal leaders were in Alipore Central Jail, they evolved a new programme of noncooperation with the Government through legislatures Their idea was to enter the legislatures in large numbers and carry on a policy of uniform continuous and consistent onnosition to the Government Moti Lal Nehru also shared the views of C R Das In July 1922, C R Das came out of jail and began to carry on propaganda in favour of Council-entry

When a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee was held at Calcutta in November 1922, there were differences of opinion among the Congress leaders on the question of Council-entry While C R Das, Moti Lal Nehru and Hakim Ajmal Khan were in favour of it, C Rajagopalachari, Dr Ansari etc , were opposed to it In spite of lengthy debates, no decision was arrived at At the annual session of the Congress held at Gaya in December 1922, the "No-changers" won a victory and the programme of Council-entry was rejected C R Das who presided over the session resigned from the Congress and announced his decision to form the Swarajist Party The object of the new party was to wreck the Government of India Act, 1919 from within the Councils In March 1023, the first Conference of the Swarajist Party was held at the residence of Mod Lal Nehru at Allahabad and the future programme of the Party was decided The keynote of the programme of the Party was

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Nehru was requested to become a member of this Committee but he refused Some of the demands in the budget of 1924-25 were rejected by the Central Assembly as a result of the efforts of the Swarajist Party The Assembly also refused to allow the Government to introduce the entire Finance Bill In February 1925, V J Patel introduced a Bill asking for the repeal of certain laws and with the exception of one, the Bill was passed A resolution was passed with the help of the Swarajist party demanding the release of certain political prisoners The Swarajists resorted to walks-outs as a mark of protest against the policy of the Government They boycotted all receptions, parties or functions organised by the Government What was done in the Central Assembly was also done in those provincial legislatures where the Swarajists had some influence

Dr R C Majumdar says that the Swarajist Party rendered a signal service to the country For the first time, the Legislative Assembly wore the appearance of a truly National Assembly where national grievances were fully voiced, national aims and aspirations expressed without any reservation and real character of the British rule exposed The British autocracy and Indian bureaucracy stood exposed to the whole world

The civil disobedience movement

There was a lot of agitation in the country when the Simon Commission visited India At the Calcutta Session of the Congress held in 1928, it was intended to pass a resolution declaring complete independence as the goal of India However, Mahatma Gandhi intervened and Dominion Status was declared to be the goal of India

Mahatma Gandhi gave the assurance that he himself would lead the movement for independence if

by the end of 1929 the British Government did not confer Dominion Status on India

When the Congress leaders met on the banks of the river Ravi, near Lahore, in 1929 they were disappointed over the attitude of the British Government Leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru Subhash Chandra Bose and Srinivas Iyengar asked for bold action against the Government In his presidential address, Jawaharlal Nehru condemned British imperialism, Kings and Princes and declared himself to be a socialist and a Republican, He called upon the leaders assembled there to take strong action in these words" Talking of high stakes and going through great dangers were the only way to achieve great things " He declared that complete independence should be the goal of the Congress Mahatma Gandhi also approved of that goal but he did not like to precipitate matters A resolution was passed that the word Swaraj in the Congress Constitution means "complete independence " All Congressmen taking part in the National Movement were asked not to take part, directly or indirectly, in future elections and the sitting members were asked to resign their seats The All-India Congress Committee was authorised to launch a programme of civil disobedience including the non-payment of taxes At midnight of 31 December 1929, the Tricolour Flag of Independence was hoisted on the banks of the river Ravi by the Congress President, Jawaharlal Nehru

26 January 1930 was declared Independence Day and a pledge was taken by the people of India on that date and the same was repeated year after year From 14 to 16 February 1930, the Congress Working Committee met at Sabarmati Ashram and vested Mahatma Gandhi with full powers to launch the Civil Disobedience Movement "at a time and place of his

choice" On 27 February, the plan of the agitation was announced and Mahatma Gandhi declared that he would first defy the Salt laws long with 78 chosen members of his Ashram On 2 March 1930, Mahatma Gandhi wrote to the Viceroy in which he gave his own assessment of the situation in the country and put forward his programme to ease the situation He made it clear that if his suggestion was not accepted, he would start, the Civil Disobedience Movement His threat was treated by the Government with amusement and contempt On 12 March 1990 accompanied by 78 inmates of the Sabarmati Ashram, Mahatma Gandhi started on his march of 240 miles to the sea-coast at Dandi Huge crowds gathered at the Ashram to see him off Gandhiji hoped that he would not return to the Ashram until Swaraj was won His march assumed the character of a Padayatra with object of achieving Purna Swaraj for India Moti Lal Nehru compared the Dandi march with the "historic march of Ramchandra to Lanka" Gandhiji described it as "the war against Salt Tax' Prayers were offered all over India for the success of Mahatma Gandhi's mission and the people watched with great interest the Progress of the march At every stage where Mahatma Gandhi halted on the way the people flocked in thousands to hear him and asked for his blessings He addressed numerous meetings and urged the people to remain non-violent

Gandhiji reached Dandi on 5 April and broke the salt laws on 6 April by picking up the salt lying on the beach He called upon the people to celebrate the week from 6 April to 13 April as the national week and defy the salt laws and picket liquor shops, opium dens and foreign cloth-dealers' shops He also appealed to the people to leave the Government schools, colleges and services, There was a favourable response from the

people, Public meetings were held all over the country, Hundreds of Government servants left their jobs Many legislators resigned their seats and hundreds of people violated the salt laws Liquor shops were boycotted Peasants refused to pay taxes and debts The country appeared to be in open revolt

The Government followed a policy of repression to suppress, the movement Even before the movement was actually started, thousands of Congress workers were arrested and put in jails Subhash Chandra Bose was sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment On 16 April 1930, Jawaharlal Nehru was put in jail and his imprisonment was followed by thousands of others Police firing, lathi-charges and arrests became the order of the day Even women were not spared From Delhi alone, about 1,600 women were arrested On 23 April 1930, the Bengal ordinance was promulgated and the life of freedom fighters was made very hard The Press Act of 1910 was strictly enforced and many restrictions were put on the newspapers Many newspapers and magazines stopped their publications Civilian property was destroyed Innocent men and women were beaten up Prisoners were starved and suffocated Hundreds of men and women were killed as a result of police firing

Mahatma Gandhi was arrested on 5 May 1930 and his place was taken by Abbas Tyabji as a leader of the movement, When he was arrested, he was succeeded by Sarojini Naidu Demonstrations were organised throughout India against Gandhiji's arrest In Bombay, riots broke out In Madras, police beating was indiscriminate The boycott of British goods was the highest in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, In U P, the peasants and zamindars were called upon to withhold, all payments of revenue, in the Central Provinces, Satyagraha was launched against forest taxes In

Karnataka a successful no-tax campaign was launched In the Midnapur District of West Bengal, Gorkha troops and Punitive police started a reign of terror which did not spare even the honour of women The peasants cheerfully saw before their eyes the destruction of their huts and all the little possessions they had on earth but they refused to pay taxes In Gujarat, the peasants began to migrate to the State of Baroda

Regarding she results of the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930 Gandhi did two things in 1930 he made the British people aware that they were cruelly subjugating India and he gave Indians the conviction that they would, by lifting their heads and straightening their spines, lift the yoke from their shoulders The British beat the Indians with batons and rifle butts The Indians neither cringed nor complained nor retreated That made England powerless and India invincible

The First Round Table Conference was held in London from 12 November 1930 to 19 January 1931 Not much was, done at the conference on, account of the absence of any representative of the Congress The steps would be taken to enlist the co-operation of those sections of public opinion which had held aloof fro the Conference

The Government seemed to be in a mood to come to terms with the Congress It was felt that there was no Prospect of the successful working of the new reforms unless the Congress was willing to work them, On 25 January 1931, Lord Irwin appealed to the people of India to consider the statement made by the British Prime minister He also declared that Mahatma Gandhi and all other members of the Congress Working Committee would be released at an

early date to consider the matter "freely and fearlessly" In pursuance of this statement, the Congress leaders were released Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, M R Jayakar and V S Satri were able to persuade Mahatma Gandhi to we the Viceroy and discus the possibility of a compromise The discussions between the Viceroy and Mahatma Gandhi continued for 15 days and on 5 March 1931 was signed the Gandhi Irwin Pact

As regards the terms of the Pact, both the Congress and the Government were required to do certain things The Government of India was to make concessions and the Congress was to withdraw the Civil Disobedience Movement It was agreed that the Government would take steps for the participation of the representatives of the Congress in the Second Round Table Conference It was specifically provided that if the Congress failed to give full effect to the obligations of the settlement, the Government was to be at liberty to take such action as might be considered necessary for the protection of the public and the individuals and due observance of law and order

The spirit in which the Gandhi-Irwin Pact was signed did not last long In spite of protests from all quarters, the Government carried out the execution Of Sardar Bhagat Singh, Sukh Dev and Rai Guru on 23 March 1931 On 18 April 1931, Lord Irwin was succeeded by Lord Willingdon The new Viceroy had no intention to abide by the terms of the Pact In the United Provinces, the armed police and magistracy terrorised and harassed the people The houses of the Congress workers were raided The Congress flag was burnt and women were insulted The holding of public meetings was prohibited, and those who violated the law were prosecuted The confiscated property of the

peasants was restored with great difficulty in Gujarat Congressmen were imprisoned without trial in Bengal Legal practitioners were requited to give undertakings Prisoners were not released in Bombay Peaceful picketing was not allowed Many students were rusticated from schools and colleges There were similar violations of the Pact in Madras and Delhi Mahatma Gandhi brought those violations to the notice of the Government but there was no response However, Mahatma Gandhi went to attend the Second Round Table Conference in London in 1931

Mahatma Gandhi attended the conference as the sole representative of the Congress He demanded control over defence and foreign affairs There was a complete deadlock on the question of representation of minorities M A Jinnah, H H the Agha Khan, and Dr Ambedkar were not willing to come to a settlement with Mahatma Gandhi, Mahatma Gandhi was not satisfied with the statement of Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald made on 1 December 1931, and declared that they had come to the parting of ways and their ways would hereafter take different directions

Mahatma Gandhi came back to India on 28 December 1931 On 29 December, he sent a telegram to the Viceroy in which he expressed his great concern over the happenings in the country He particularly referred to the uncalled for shootings in the country, In reply, the Government justified its stand, The Viceroy also refused to grant' an interview to Mahatma Gandhi On 4 January 1932, die Government of India issued 4 Ordinances, viz, the Emergency Power Ordinance, Unlawful Instigation Ordinances, Unlawful Association Ordinance and Prevention of Molestation and Boycott Ordinance Within a short time, the number of Ordinances reached 13, The scope of these Ordinances was very comprehensive and they covered

early date to consider the matter "freely and fearlessly " In pursuance of this statement, the Congress leaders were released Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, M R Jayakar and V S Satri were able to persuade Mahatma Gandhi to we the Viceroy and discus the possibility of a compromise The discussions between the Viceroy and Mahatma Gandhi continued for 15 days and on 5 March 1931 was signed the Gandhi Irwin Pact

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campaign was also continued However, a stage came when the political enthusiasm of the people became less and less and feelings of frustration set in The movement was suspended in May 1933 and completely withdrawn in May 1934 Gandhiji withdrew himself from active politics

The second world war

On 1 September 1939, the Second World War began On 3 September 1939, the Viceroy of India declared war against Germany without consulting or taking into confidence the Indian leaders Indian troope were sent to the various theatres of war for the defence of the British Empire After having done all this, the Viceroy started consultation with the Indian leaders The Working Committee of the Congress in, at Wardha in September 1939 and after prolonged deliberations, a resolution was adopted in which it was declared that if the war was "to defend the status quo, imperialist possessions, colonies, vested interests and privileges then India can have nothing to do with it If however the issue is democracy and a world based on democracy, then India is intensely interested in it If Great Britain was fighting for the maintenance and extension of democracy, then she must necessarily end imperialism in her own possessions and establish full democracy in India The British Government was called upon to declare its war aims "in regard to democracy and imperialism" and also to declare whether those aims were going to apply to India and to be given effect to at present

On 27 July, 1940, a resolution was passed by the Congress in which an offer of co-operation in the war was made provided India's demand for independence was conceded and a provisional National Government responsible to the then Central Assembly was formed

at he Centre On, 8 August 1940, the Viceroy issued a statement in which it a declared that the new Constitution of India would primarily be the responsibility of the Indians themselves However, it was made clear that Great Britain could not contemplate transfer of their present responsibilities for the peace and welfare of India to any system of Government whose authority indirectly denied by large and powerful elements in India's rational life nor could they parties to the coercion of such elements into submission of such a Government It was also declared that after the war a representative Indian constitution making body would be set up and the Indian proposals as to its form and operation would at any time be welcome The Congress was wholly disappointed with the August Offer

It was in the month of March 1942 that Cripps was sent to India with certain Proposals with a view to seek the cooperation of the Congress in the prosecution of the war To begin with, the response of the Congressmen was favourable Cripps is stated to have assured the Congress leaders that under the proposed scheme, the Governor-General would function as a constitutional head It appears that the offer was made without consulting the Viceroy and consequently the Viceroy complained to Prime Minister Churchill and the latter informed Cripps that he would be repudiated if he went too far Fresh instructions were sent to Cripps and the latter told the Congress President that the position of the Viceroy could not be changed without a change in the law On 11 April 1942, a resolution was passed by the Congress Working Committee rejecting Cripps proposals It was pointed out that only a free and independent India could undertake the defence of the country on a national basis

"Quit India" movement

After the failure of the Cripps Mission, there were differences of opinion among the Congress leaders regarding the future course of action to be adopted The view of Maulana Azad who at that time was the Congress President, was that negotiations should be resumed with Great Britain and full co-operation should be extended to the United Nations if Great Britain made an absolute promise of Indian independence after the war and it the American President or the United Nations gave a guarantee that the promise will be fulfilled, Nehru's view was that the British Government must make a formal declaration of India's independence at once The Provisional Government then formed should negotiate with Great Britain the terms of cooperation The Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Forces was to be given full support in all decisions relating to military matters and the Japanese must be resisted by the Indians at all costs Mahatma Gandhi advocated mass action to drive out the British out of India

A meeting of the Congress Working Committee was held at Wardha and after a lot of discussion a resolution was passed on 14 July 1942, which stated that the failure of the Cripps Mission and the attitude of the British Government towards India has resulted in a rapid and widespread increase of ill-will against Britain and a growing satisfactory at the influence of Japanese arms It was stated that the Congress desired to build up resistance to any aggression on or invasion of India by the Japanese or any foreign power and the Congress would change the ill-will against Great, Britain into goodwill "if India feels the glow of freedom " It was made clear that "in making the proposal for the withdrawal of the British rule from India, the Congress had no desire whatsoever to

embarrass Great Britain or the Allied Powers in their prosecution of the war, or in any way to encourage aggression on India or increased pressure on China by the Japanese or any other power associated with the Axis Group It was hoped that this very reasonable and just proposal would be accepted by Great Britain, not only in the interests of India but also that of Britain and of the cause of freedom to which the United Nations proclaimed their adherence It was made clear in the resolution that in case India's appeal was not accepted, the Congress would then be reluctantly compelled to utilise all non-violent strength it might have gathered since 1920, when it adopted nonviolence as part of its policy, for, the vindication of political rights and liberty The final decision was to be, taken by the All India Congress whose meeting was fixed for 7 August 1942 at Bombay

The Congress gave 24 days to the Government to make a favourable response On 15 July 1942 Mahatma Gandhi told the foreign press that if the movement had to be launched it would be a nonviolent one On 25 July 1942, President Chiang Kai-shek wrote to President Roosevelt to intervene so that the Congress was not forced to launch the movement The letter was forwarded to Churchill but nothing came out of it

A meeting of the All India Congress Committee was held in Bombay on 7 August 1942 as scheduled The general feeling was that an attempt be made to come to terms with the Government and for that purpose Mahatma Gandhi expressed the wish to meet the Viceroy, However, on 8 August 1942, the famous "Quit India" resolution was moved by Jawaharlal Nehru and passed by an overwhelming majority It was declared in that resolution that the immediate ending of the British rule in India was an urgent

necessity, both for the sake of India and for the success of the cause of the United Nations India had become the crux of the question Great Britain and the United Nations will be judged by the independence of India Addressing the Congress delegates on the night of 8 August 1942, therefore, want freedom immediately, this very night, before dawn, if it can be had You may take it from me that I am not going to strike a bargain with 'he Viceroy for ministers and the like I am not going to be satisfied with anything short of complete freedom, Here is a Mantra, a short one, that I give you You may imprint it on your hearts and let every breath of yours give expression to it The Mantra is "Do or die' We shall either free India or die in the attempt, we shall not live to see the perpetuation of our slavery

When the resolution was passed, an appeal was made to Great Britain and tire United Nations to respond to the "call of reason and justice" It was also decided that all efforts should be made to come to a settlement with the government and it was only when those efforts failed that the movement was to be started after Mahatma Gandhi had given his sanction Mahatma Gandhi and Maulana Azad openly declared that they would approach the Viceroy again and the heads of the various Governments for an honourable settlement It was also decided that Jawaharlal Nehru was to explain on 9 August 1942 to the United States the scope and contents of the 'Quit India' resolution

It appears that the Government had already finalised their plans to arrest the Congress leaders and crush their movement and consequently, in the early hours of the morning of 9 August, Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Maulana Azad, Sardar Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Acharya KriPalani etc were arrested As many as 148 Congress leaders were

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injured Nehru's view was dial figures of the dead varied between 4,000 to 10,000 More than 60,000 persons were arrested up to the end of 1942, 26,000, persons were convicted and 18,000 were detained under the Defence of India Rules

Many reasons have been given for starting the "Quit India" movement The first was, the growing threat of Japanese invasion of India Mahatma Gandhi wanted to save India from that attack and his view was if the British Government withdrew from India, the Japanese might not attack India Another reason was the defencelessness of the British position in India and their easy defeat in Singapore The view of Mahatma Gandhi was that India would meet the same fate if the British did not withdraw from India, Another reason was the alarming growth of Axis propaganda which was having its effect on the minds of the people of India, This was particularly so on account of the broadcasts of Subhash Chandra Bose from Berlin in the Indian languages Another cause was that the mind of Mahatma Gandhi was revolting against the racial discrimination shown in the process of evacuation from Burma' The British provided separate routes for the evacuation of Europeans and Indians Tire White Road was meant for Europeans and the Black Road for Indians, The result was that the Indian evacuees had to undergo too many hardships on the way There was a lot of resentment in the country when the people heard of the sufferings of the Indians and that contributed to the decision of Mahatma Gandhi to start the "Quit India" movement Another cause was the sufferings of the people on account of the "scorched earth" policy followed by the British Government in India The lands belonging to the people of India were taken for military purposes and they were not given adequate compensation, They

were deprived of their means of livelihood A lot of harshness was used by the Government while getting the houses of peasants evacuated for the military The inefficient and ineffective controls and transportation muddles added to the sufferings of the people Prices rose in those months and the people lost their faith in the paper currency issued by the Government There was a lot of discontentment among the people and Mahatma Gandhi decided to take advantage of it

The failure of the Quit India movement was due to many causes The first was the tactical mistakes of organisation and planning The arrest of Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress leaders left the people without any leadership or guidance There wag no coordination and no strategy Those who led the movement were divided in their views on the course of action Nobody knew what to do The loyalty of the services and the superior physical strength of the Government succeeded in crushing the revolt The movement did riot have the support of the uppei classes of India consisting of rich merchants, landlords and princes and also a part of labour On the whole, the Muslim remained aloof from the movement They were told by the Muslim League that the movements was directed to coerce the British Government to hand over to the Hindus the administration of the country

As regards the gains of the revolt of 1942, Dr Amba Prasad says that although the revolt failed it prepared the ground for indepedence in 1947 After the revolt, no doubt was left in the minds of the British rulers that the days of British domination, of India were numbered It was only a question of time The revolt marked the culmination of the Indian freedom movement It gave utterance to India's anger against imperialism and her determination to be free It is true that there were many political developments and

much parleyinig and bargaining between the revolt of August 1942 and the independence of India in August 1947, but there was no doubt about the fact that the freedom struggle was bound to win

Two important events took place in 1945 One was that general elections took place in England and the Labour Party came to power The other was the surrender of Japan on 14 August 1945 and the termination of hostilities in the Far East Unlike Churchill, the new Labour Government was sympathetically inclined towards the Indian demand for freedom As the pre-occupation with war was over, the Labour Government tried to solve the Indian problem The Viceroy of India was summoned to London After prolonged discussions, the Viceroy came back to India and declared on 19 September 1945 that the, Government had decided to convene a constitution-making body in the near future It was declared that elections to the Central Assembly and the Provincial Legislatures would be held "during the coming cold weather "

Elections to the Central Assembly were held in November and December 1945 In the first week of January, 1946, the Parliamentary Delegation Came to India to meet the Indian leaders On 15th March 1946, Prime Minister Attlee declared in the House of Commons that India herself must decide her future Constitution and no minority in India would be allowed to place a veto on the advance of the majority The Cabinet Mission reached Delhi on 24 March 1946 and on 16 May 1946, it gave its own solution of the problem known as the Cabinet Mission Scheme, On 2 september 1946, Jawaharlal Nehru formed the Interim Government The Constituent Assembly met on 9 December 1916 but was boycotted by the Muslim League On 20 February 1946, the British Government

declared that it would transfer power into the hands of the Indians by a date not later than June 1948 Lord Mountbatten gave his 3 June Plan for the partition of India The Indian Independence Act was passed in July 1947 and India became Independent on 15 August 1947

Why England gave India independence?

There were many reasons which forced the British Government to grant independence to India and the most important was the strength of the nationalist movement The movement under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi had become so strong that the grant of independence could not he postponed for long, The "Quit India" Movement had shown that the people of India could go to any length to bring to an end the British Raj in the country They made tremendous sacrifices to paralyse the administrative machinery The British Government was fully aware of the slogans "Do or Die" and "Now or Never" The organisation of the Indian National Army under Subhash Chandra Bose and the cry of "Delhi Chalo" made the British Government realise the folly of resisting the demand of the people of India for independence

Another cause was that the British Government lost faith in the loyalty of the armed forces in India, particularly the Navy Throughout, Great Britain had relied upon force and military superiority for maintaining its hold over India Force was always available to crush any revolt on the part of the Indians, However, circumstances changed to such an extent during the Second World War that the loyalty of the Indian forces could not be depended upon, Thousands of Indians front all over India joined the anned forces during the Second World War They not

only fought for the victory of the Allied Powers but also hoped that India would get independence after the war No wonder when the war was over, these persons began to clamour for the freedom of India, They were willing to give a helping hand to the nationalist movement in the country Political consciousness was visible in the armed forces of the country On 19 February 1946, the Ratings of the Royal Indian Navy stopped work and gave a notice to the Government that unless their demands were met by a particular date, they would resign en bloc There were strikes at the Air Force bases Signs of open revolt were visible in Bombay, Calcutta and Karachi It is true that the revolts were crushed but a feeling was created among the British that they could not keep India under their control with the help of the Indian forces The British troops in the Indian Ocean could help in maintaining British control over India for some time, but that could rot continue for long It was under these circumstances that the British Government decided to withdraw from India

After the end of the Second World War, the British authorities decided to try Col Shah Nawaz, Captain Sehgal and Dhillon and other members of the Indian National Army for the crime of waging war against the King-Emperor before a Court Martial There was a lot of agitation in the country against the decision of the Government On 22 September 1945, the Congress Working Committee appointed a committee, to defend the I N A men The trial started on 5 November 1945 in the Red Fort of Delhi and lasted up to 31 December The decision was announced on 3 January 1946 and Shah Nawaz, Sehgal and Dhillon were found guilty and sentenced to transportation for life Many more trials were held and the accused were found guilty During the trial, the

sufferings of the I N A officers and men came to light The arguments put forward by the defence counsel were published in the newspapers and read by millions of Indians Shah Nawaz, Sehgal and Dhillon became popular heroes There were mass demonstrations throughout the country for their release Om certain occasion, the police resorted to firing and many Indians lost their lives The result was that Field Marshal Auchinleck, Commander-in-Chief of India, granted clemency to Shah Nawaz, Sehgal and Dhillon On 6 February 1946, the Government of India announced its decision not to proceed any further with the trials and consequently cases against the rest of the I N A, men were withdrawn, After their release, the I N A officers and men toured all over the country and they were greeted with cries of "Jai Hind" So great was the enthusiasm among the people that the English began to feel that it was not possible for them to keep India in chains

There had been a feeling in India that the British power was in vincible However, this impression was removed during the Second World War as a result of the military reverses suffered by the British troops at the hands of the Japanese British troops were forced to evacuate Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaya and Burma, Their best ships, "The Repulse" and "Prince of Wales", were sunk, Great Britain was not in a position to demonstrate in Asia the background of strength and influence which had for so long enabled her to rule a million people with one man on the spot

Great Britain had to spend so much during the Second World War that she was completely exhausted She was forced to borrow on an enormous scale She had to depend upon other countries not only for foodstuffs but also for raw materials to run her factories She depended upon American help in every

field The Englishmen had too many problems to tackle at home It was felt that it was not wise to keep herself involved in India when all her energy was required at home The American Government also put pressure on the British Government to grant India independence as the Allied Powers had been fighting for freedom and democracy, Even diehards like Churchill began to feel that it was not of any advantage to keep India under bondage

Mr Attlee, Prime Minister of England at that time, had a lot to do with the grant of independence to India He had always taken keen interest in the Indian affairs, When he became Prime Minister of England in 1945, he came to the conclusion that even if Great Britain was able to keep India in bondage with the help of force, that was not profitable to her as by doing so, she was bound to lose the goodwill of the people of India and in that case, the Indo-British relations were bound to suffer in the long tun His view was that Great Britain was bound to gain if she was able to win the goodwill of the people of India by giving them independence To begin with, he sent the Cabinet Mission to India, but when that failed, he sent Lord Mountbatten to complete the process of transfer of power in India

Another reason why Great Britain that she got involved in the cold war after the Second World War Both the United States and the Soviet Union accused each other, The Russians had an advantage over the Americans in the cold war They could always point out the fact that Great Britain was keeping India in chains Great Britain could be in a better position if she granted India independence

A large number of persons advocated the cause of India's freedom abroad Among them were Louis

Fischer, Pearl Buck, Lin Yu-tang, Norman, Thomas and J J Singh The Indian viewpoint was put forward before the Conference at San Francisco which met to finalise the Charter of the United Nations, Great Britain was not only a signatory to the Charter but, her delegates, played, an important part in framing it This fact was bound to affect the attitude of the British Government towards India She could not talk of freedom for all while keeping India in bondage

Another factor with influenced the British decision to leave India was a change in the concept of the British Commonwealth In July 1947, the Commonwealth, Relation, Office was set up If the British could treat other Dominions in that manner, there was no reason why the same could not be done with regard to India It was felt that even after India was given Independence, site could be persuaded to be, a part, and parcel of the Commonwealth of Nations and hence no loss to Great Britain

The view of Maulana Azad was that the British Government decided to leave India only after making sure that she could continue to have a foot-hold on the Indian sub-continent The British decision to partition India and then to transfer power was the culmination of the policy or "divide and rule" The partition of India in which the Muslim majority provinces formed a separate and independent state would give Britain a foot-hold in India A state dominated by the Muslim League would offer a permanent sphere of influence to Great Britain

We are reliably informed by some respectable Indians who returned to India from England during the year immediately following the end of the Second World Way that British soldiers who had first-hand knowledge of the poverty of the Indian masses spoke

about it feelingly to their friends and relatives That knowledge filtered down to the people A feeling was created in England that perhaps with the independence, the Indians might be able to improve their economic condition That explains the unanimous support given, by the members of Parliament to the Indian Independence Bill in July 1947

The view of Prime Minister Attlee was that the independence of India was the fulfilment of Britain's mission in India, The British were leaving India after fulfilling their mission in the country, They had taught the Indians to govern themselves and they were now leaving the reins of Government in their hands

60

Partition and Achievement of Freedom

The League observed the 'Pakistan Day' on March 23, 1943 It declared that Pakistan was the final goal of the Muslims in India It became clear that some sort of compromise was necessary between the Congress and Muslim League In March, 1944 Mr C Rajagopalachari evolved a formula with concurrence of Gandhi The scheme suggests that

(a) The League should cooperate with the Congress in its demand of complete Independence

(b) After the close of the war, a plebiscite would be held in the Muslim majority provinces to decide whether or not they should form a separate state

(c) In the event of separation, the two states would make an agreement concerning Defence, Communication and other matters of common concern

(d) The scheme would be put into practice only when India was given complete Independence The formula, however, was rejected by the League

Another attempt for compromise between the two parties was made by Mr Bhulabhai Desai, leader of the Congress in the Central Legislative Assembly He met Mr Liaquat Ali Khan, deputy leader of the League in the Assembly and proposed that an Interim government should be formed at the Centre consisting

of equal number of persons nominated by the Congress and the League in the Central Legislature, representatives of minorities and the Commander-in-Chief The Muslim League rejected this scheme as well

Election of 1945-1946

The failure of the Wavell Plan led to widespread disappointment and anger in the country But there was a ray of hope for the Indians for something to come from London when the Labour Party came to power in England and formed the Government on 10 July 1945 The hope was further brightened with the appointment of Lord Pethick Lawrence who was a great friend of India in the post of Secretary of State of India The cessation of hostilities in Europe was another factor that was bound to have some bearing on the English attitude towards India The trial of some of the officers of the Indian National Army by the British Court Martial in the historic Red Fort in Delhi in 1945-1946 flared up the imagination of the Indians when the Congress fully identified itself with the ideals and interests of the gallant soldiers of the Indian National Army This endeared the Congress with the masses at large

Almost immediately after Lord Pethick Lawrence assumed office, Lord Wavell was called for discussion by the home Government in London On 21 August, 1945 the Viceroy announced his decision to hold elections to the Central and Provincial Legislatures in India This was followed by the Viceroy's visit to London After his return from London Wavell on 19 September 1945 declared that after the elections in India a Constituent Assembly would be convened for the purpose of making anew constitution and that he would reconstitute the Executive Council with the

support of the major political parties in India He also hoped that responsible Government would be formed in the provinces On 4 December 1945 the Secretary of State for India made it clear on the floor of the House of Lords that the English Government regarded the setting up of the constitution-making body as a matter of urgency He also pointed out that a parliamentary delegation under the auspices of the Empire Parliamentary Association would be sent to India to establish personal contact between the members of the parliament and leading "Indian political personalities "

The cabinet mission plan of 1946

Although the Congress captured almost all the non-Muslim league occupied by and large all seats in the Muslim-populated areas This escalated the demand for Pakistan All over the country there was discontent and unrest that manifested itself in strikes by the workers in the factories and the members of the navy To assuage the public feelings the English Prime Minister Attlee made an important announcement on 19 February, 1946 that a special mission consisting of three Cabinet ministers, namely Lord Pethick Lawrence, Secretary of State for India, Sir Stafford Cripps, the President of the Board of Trade and A V Alexander, the First Lord of the Admiralty would go to India to hammer out a solution of the political and constitutional problems of India On 15 March 1946 Attlee made a declaration in the House of Commons that appeared to be a departure from the traditional policy of the English to favour the Muslim League "We are very mindful of the rights of the minorities and the minorities should be able to lice free from fear On the other hand, we cannot allow a minority to place a veto on the advance of the majority " The second sentence had an undertone for the Muslims and as such was most welcome by the Hindus The Cabinet

Mission stayed in India from March 1946 to June 1946 The Mission met the leaders of the Congress and the Muslim League in different sittings and after a prolonged discussion released the suggestions of the Cabinet Mission on 16 March 1946

The Cabinet Mission rejected the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan since it would not be viable on the following grounds (1) The creation of Pakistan would not solve the problems of the Muslims, because the 37 93% non-Muslims would still live in the north-west part of Pakistan and 48 31% non-Muslims would be left in the north-eastern zone of Pakistan It would be highly improper to include inside Pakistan the non-Muslim districts of Assam, Bengal and the Punjab The division of Bengal and Punjab would be detrimental to the interests of a large proportion of the inhabitants of these provinces (2) The creation of Pakistan would mean dismemberment of the transport system and disintegration of the post and telegraph system of the country (3) The creation of Pakistan would mean division of the armed forces that would spell "gravest danger" for the subcontinent (4) The establishment of Pakistan would result in keeping the two nations, namely India and Pakistan separated by seven hundred miles and the result would be that Pakistan in "war and peace would be dependent on the goodwill of Hindustan" Actuated by these cogent grounds the Mission discarded the demand for Pakistan would participate About the Cabinet Mission Dr K M Munshi wrote "since many years for the first time an authoritative pronouncement in clear terms has been made against the possibility of Pakistan "

According to the Commission the constitution should be drawn up in the following lines (a) The Union of India should have exclusive jurisdiction with regard to foreign affairs, defence and communications

(b) There should be an Executive and a Legislature The Union Legislature will decide any question of major communal issue by a majority of the representatives of the two major communities as well as a majority of all the members present and voting (c) The provinces would be perfect mistresses in their own house with regard to all matters other than the Union subjects and at the same time would enjoy all residuary powers (d) The Hindu majority provinces namely Bihar, Bombay, Central Provinces, Madras, Orissa and United Provinces were clubbled together to form 'Group A' Similarly, the Muslim majority provinces e g North West Frontier Province, Punjab and Sind were to constitute Group B Assam and Bengal would from Group C Of the four Chief commissioners' provinces, namely Ajmer-Marwar, Baluchistan, Coorg and Delhi, all but Baluchistan would join Group A and Baluchistan would be grouped with Group B Full autonomy was given to the provinces for joining any Group It was clear that Group B and C would be under the control of the Muslims The Cabinet Mission was bent upon setting the wheels of the Constituent Assembly in motion It did not consider viable to introduce the election on the basis of adult suffrage for electing the members of the constituent Assembly

On the other hand, the Constituent Assembly would be elected by the Provincial Assemblies Each group of the Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs would elect their own representatives to the Constituent Assembly on the basis of proportional representation by a single transferable vote Four members from the for Chief Commissioners' provinces and not more than ninety three members from the Indian states would be added to the aforesaid number of 292 members The Cabinet Mission also suggested that an Interim Government

would be formed with the representatives of all the political parties Since the suggestion was acceptable to both the Congress and the Muslim League, they participated in the elections of the Constituent Assembly

Constituent assembly election and formation of the interim Government

We have already noticed that the Cabinet Mission Plan was accepted by both the Congress and the Muslim League, though both expected something better The Congress did not like the provision of grouping the provinces And the main grouse with the league was that it die not meet their demand for Pakistan In July 1946 the election to the Constituent Assembly was held all over the country The Congress secured 205 seats and the League captured 73 seats, while the Sikhs got for themselves 4 seats Thus counting upon the Sikh support the congress got 209 seats in an Assembly of 296 seats This was naturally disturbing for Mohammed Ali Jinnah, since his party was bound to be overwhelmingly overshadowed by the Congress in the Constituent Assembly

Driven by dismay and frustration the League took a resolution which came to be known as the "Direct Action Resolution" and fixed 16 August 1946 as the day of "Direct Action" on which date the biggest genocide took place in Calcutta which came to be known as the "Great Killing" in Calcutta which was the capital city of a Muslim province In the hands of the Muslim fanatics the city was reduced into "bloody shamples" Atrocities of worst description was perpetrated upon the Hindu minorities in other parts of Bengal, of which the most conspicuous were Noakhali and Tipperah Communal riots spread to Bihar, United Provinces and Bombay When the country was polarised between the Hindus and

Muslims a division of the country on the communal lines was in the air It is in the midst of the communal frazy that the Viceroy invited Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the Congress President to form the Interim "Government and he assumed office on 2 September 1946 Although the Muslim League was also invited to join the Interim Government it walked away from the Government So the Interim Government predominantly was Hindu in composition with the following members Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Dr Rejendra Prasad, Chakravorty Rajagopalachari, Dr John Mathai, Sardar Baldev Singh, Sir Shafat Ahmad Khan, Jagjivan Ram, Syed Ali Zaheer, C H Bhabha, Asaf ali and Sarat Chandra Bose Although the Muslim League refused in join the ministry at the request of the Viceroy the League changed their decision and on 26 October 1946 five members of the league were inducted in the ministry They were Liaquat Ali Khan, Ghazanfar Ali Khan, Abdul Rab Nishtar, I I Chundrigrar and Jogendra Nath Mandal (Scheduled Caste) To accommodate the new ministers in the Interim Government three Congress ministers resigned They were Sarat Chandra Bose, Syed Ali Zaheer and Sir Shafaat Ahmad Khan But the inclusion of the League members in the ministry made the Interim Government a house divided and a ship directed in opposite directions Pandit Nehru did not fight shy to openly declare that "The League pursued their aim to enlist British support and tried to establish themselves the King's party "

Attlee's announcement for transfer of power

The English government at London was unhappy at the growing differences among the Indian political parties that were hampering the functioning of the Constituent Assembly The English Prime Minister

Clement Attlee made the famous announcement on 20 February 1947 that "His Majesty's Government wish to make clear that it is their definite intention to take necessary steps to effect the transference of power to responsible India hands by June 1948 " Evidently Attlee was worried at the persistent negative role plated by the Muslim League in the constituent Assembly If the League did not change their stand in boycotting the Constituent Assembly the Government in London might decide to whom the powers of the Central Government in British India should be handed over as a whole or in part or if necessary to the Provincial Government It was, therefore, clear from the declaration of Attlee that the Government at London might allow partition of the country by June 1948 so as to enable it to transfer power by the deadline In this way the Cripps Mission Plan was at last acceptable and the "post-dated cheque" was at last honoured by the "crashing bank" i e the British empire

The immediate reaction of the Muslim League was a raging fight to set on motion the fanatic monster of partition on the Indian scene and it unleashed violence in Assam, Bengal, North West Frontier Provinces and the Punjab Since Attlee's declaration suggested that power would be handed over to the Provincial governments, the League was but to dislodge the anti-League ministries in Assam, North West Frontier Provinces and the Punjab by creating disturbances and chaotic conditions The League was crowned with success in the Punjab where the Governor took over the administration under Section 93 of the Government of India Act of 1935 But the Leagues's dream did not come true in Assam and the North West Frontier Provinces It was now gaining ground for division of the country, since that was

considered the only way out to avoid disturbances and chaos that had rendered the unity and integration of the country impossible

The Indian Independence Act, 1947

As a follow-up measure of the Mountbatten Plan came the Indian Independence Act of 1947 which was the swan song of the English Parliament's legislative jurisdiction over India As the Mountbatten's Plan of 3 June 1947 was accepted by both the Congress and the Muslim League the English Government went ahead to transfer power in India to the Indian hands A legislation was necessary in the British Parliament for that purpose So on 4 July 1947 the Indian Independence Bill was introduced in the Parliament of England and within a fortnight's time it was made into tan Act on 18 July 1947 It should be remembered that the Act of 1947 did not introduce any new constitution for India It was rather an "Enabling legislation" for the representatives of both India and Pakistan "to frame their own constitutions and to provide for the exceedingly difficult period of transition " As a matter of fact, the Act of 1947 gave a legal coating to the Mountbatten Plan of 3 June, 1947 When the Act was on its anvil England's Prime Minister Clement Attlee said "It is the culminating point in a long course of events the Act of 1935, the declaration at the time of the Cripps Mission, are all steps in the road that led up eventually to the proposals that I announced to the House on 3rd June last This basis is designed to implement those proposals "

The Act put an end tot he English rule in India with effect from 15 August 1947 With the winding up of the English rule over India it was but natural that the post of the Secretary of State for India was to be abolished and his office was taken over by the

Secretary for Commonwealth Affairs The Crown of England gave up the designation of "Emperor of India" The Act of 1947 divided the country into two parts—India and Pakistan, each independent and sovereign Each of the Dominions pending the making and adoption of a new constitution would be governed by the provisions of the Government of India Act of 1935 and their existing Constituent Assembly would be the Dominion Legislature Thus the Act of 1947 provided that until a new parliament was created according to the provisions of the new constitution, the Constituent Assembly itself would, meanwhile, act as the parliament of the Dominions The Act of 1947 closed the chapter of English rule in India and opened a new chapter for independent India minus Pakistan which itself became an independent country in the subcontinent The self-withdrawal of the English from the Indian subcontinent and creating two independent states therein by a parliamentary enactment is rare instance of magnanimity in the whole history of the parliament of England So the Act of 1947 is called "the noblest and greatest law ever enacted by the British Parliament "

Partition of India and the freedom at Midnight

The Mountbatten Plan of 3 June, 1947 was accepted by all the major parties in India The Congress accepted it under duress and to avoid more bloodshed and the Sikhs ultimately agreed to it since it was unavoidable But there was jubilance in the Muslim League camp, though Mohammad Ali Jinnah said that they were "thrusting a moth-eaten Pakistan down the Muslim throat", yet he was happy since he did not fight shy to admit that he never dreamt Pakistan coming into existence in his life time Both the Punjab and Bengal assemblies voted for partition and it became necessary to decide what would be the boundary of the two

provinces So Lord Mountbatten appointed a Boundary Commission to go into the question and asked Radcliff to complete the task as early as possible West Bengal and East Punjab remained in India and East Bengal and West Punjab joined Pakistan There was a referendum in the Sylhet district of Assam and it voted for Pakistan Sind opted for Pakistan The North West Frontier Province by a referendum chose to go to Pakistan So Jinnah who wanted to get into Pakistan the whole of Assam, Bengal and Punjab got rather what he called "a truncated Pakistan" But this was a big premium India had to pay for freedom and independence from the English rule

On 15 August 1947 when power was transferred, Mahatma Gandhi, stayed away at Calcutta and described the independence as a "sorry affair " One day earlier on 14 August 1947 Pakistan came into being

Although India was free to choose her own Governor-General as the constitutional head, the Indian leaders decided that it would be better not to make a sudden change and felt that the appointment of Lord Mountbatten would give continuity of policy and administration It was also though that Pakistan would reciprocate the same feeling But at the last moment the Muslim League caused a surprise by appointing Jinnah the Governor-General of Pakistan A special session of the Constituent Assembly of the Indian Union was held at Delhi on the midnight of 14 August 1947 The great moment for which the nation had struggled so long at last came true Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in his memorable address to the Constituent Assembly and to the nation said "At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom A moment comes which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new "

The feeling of the nation was one mixed with joy and sorrow It was indeed rejoicing to get back the independence It was a matter of sorrow to see the plight of millions of brothers of East Bengal and West Punjab groaning under the weight of Pakistan and compelled to take refuge in India to find a new living Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the nation was unhappy In the conversation with Lord Mountbatten he expressed his unhappiness with the partition of the country

The last phase of the Indian freedom movement was bathed in blood as serious riots broke out in the Punjab, making it plain that both the East and West Punjab were determined to go their respective ways If Mr Jinnah wants his pound of flesh, then he cannot have a single Hindu in his new dominion The Hindus of the East Punjab and the Muslims of the West Punjab virtually effected a violent and bloody transfer of their respective populations of their territories Trainloads of emigres were slaughtered in both the Punjab till the fury subsided in March 1948 In October 1947, the "raiders" of the N W F P poured in the valleys of Kashmir, thus commencing the "Kashmir Operations" which ceased when Nehru on 1st January magnanimously but mistakenly agreed to a cease-fire arranged through the United Nations, at a time when our gallant Jawans were in a position to clear off the Kashmir valleys of all Pakistani intruders This wrong decision froze the situation in Kashmir Pakistan tried to alter the boundaries by force in 1965 and in 1971 but both these attempts failed Reluctantly Pakistan agreed to the actual line of control in 1972 in Simla after the Bangladesh war Today the so-called "Kashmir question" continues to poison the Indo-Pakistani relations However, this phase of uneasy peace between the two neighbours continues India and

Pakistan, the two independent nations created from the same embryo of Mother India in 1947, after ninety years of heroic freedom struggle are today poised to enter the 21st century May the spirit of peace continue to guide both the leaders and the peoples of both the countries

61

Leaders of Modern India

Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917)

Dadabhai Naoroji, affectionately known as the Grand Old Man of India, served India for 61 long years—40 years before foundation of the Indian National Congress and 21 years after that He was permanently settled in England and was elected a member of the House of Commons from an English Constituency For some time, he was the Prime Minister of Baroda He founded the British Indian Society in England to carry on propaganda in favour of India

He was elected the President of the Congress thrice, viz , in 1886, 1893 and 1906, His election as the President of the Congress for the second time, 1893, was an appreciation of his election to the House of Commons On that occasion, he took the opportunity to exhort the British not to drive this force into opposition instead of drawing it to your own side He contended that this Congress represents the aristocracy of intellect He hoped that our faith in the instinctive love of Justice and fairplay of the United Kingdom is not misplaced The day, I hope, is not distant when the world will see the noblest spectacle of a great nation like the, British holding out the hands of true fellow-citizenship and of justice

He was elected the President of the Congress in 1906 as the Moderates felt that he was the only person who was not likely to be opposed by the Extremists As

that time, there was a lot of excitement in the country The anti-Partition agitation was going on in Bengal, Swadeshi and Boycott were in the air Even in 1906, Dadabhai Naoroji had not given up his faith in the justice of the Englishmen In his presidential address in 1906, he observed thus our faith and our future are in our hands If we are true to ourselves and to our country and make all the necessary sacrifices for our elevation and amelioration, I for one have not a shadow of doubt that in dealing with such justice-loving, fair-minded people as the British, we may rest assured that we shall not work in vain It is this conviction which has supported me against all difficulties ,, However, it cannot be denied that the credit of demanding Swaraj from the Congress platform for the first time belongs to Dadabhai Naoroji Instead of going into any further divisions or details of our rights as British citizens, the whole matter can be comprised in one word—self-government or Swaraj, like that of the United Kingdom or the Colonies

It was under his Presidentship in 1906 that four resolutions on self-government, boycott movement, Swadeshi and national education were passed by the Congress

Dadabhai Naoroji was the first Indian politician to draw the attention of the people to the drain of India's wealth to Great Britain as a result of the British rule in India He gave his views in the famous book entitled Poverty and Un-British Rule in India Dadabhai Naoroji wrote thus to J D Sunderland in 1905 The lot of India, is a very sad one Her condition is that of a master and slave, but it is worse, it is that of a plundered nation in the hands of constant plunderers with the plunder carried away clean out of the land In the case of plundering raids occasionally

made, an India before the English went, away and there were long intervals of security during which the land could recoup and become again rich and prosperous But nothing of the kind ii true now The British invasion is continuous and the plunder goes right on with no intermission and actually increases and the impoverished Indian nation has no opportunity whatever to recuperate Dadabhai Naoroji pointed out how since 1889-94 the population grew by 14 per cent but the net Government administrative expenditure by 16 per cent, while since 1884-85 the population grew by 18 per cent and the expenditure by 11 per cent The military expenditure alone rose from Rs 17 to 32 crores, 7 crores being spent in England The recommendations of the Welby Commission in favour of an apportionment of the military expenditure between England and India were honoured in letter but disregarded in spirit for a contribution was made by England but the pay of the English soldiers was raised so as to take away thrice the contribution made

According to Dr Pattabhi Sitaramayya, the name of Dadabhai Naoroji comes first in the list of Indian patriarchs who beginning his connection with the Congress from its very outset, continued to serve it till the evening of his life, and took it through the whole gamut of evolution, from the humble position of being a people's organ seeking redress of administrative grievances to that of a National Assembly working for the definite object of attaining Swaraj It is impossible to recount within the short space of a few pages the services of one who lived and worked incessantly for India's uplift, whose pen knew no rest and whom Providence gave more that, the proverbial three score years and ten Dadabhai lived and laboured and has left behind him not only the noble example of a dedicated life but also in flesh and blood his grand

daughters who are maintaining the noble traditions created by him For 61 long years in England and India, by day and by night in circumstances favourable and adverse, in the face of discouragement which would have broken the heart of a smaller man, Dadabhai Naoroji served the Motherland with undeviating purpose, with complete selflessness and with vitality of faith which put to shame most youngmen Withal, he was the greatest of souls and the most charitable in judgment and never made a personal enemy In respect equally of the highest personal character and the greatest public services, Dadabhai Naoroji was the loftiest ideal his countrymen could set before themselves respectively to follow at a distance The public life of India has been adorned by a galaxy of brilliant intellects and selfless patriots, but there has been in our time none comparable with Dadabhai Naoroji If ever there is the divine in man, it is an Dadabhai Naoroji

Gopal Krishan Gokhale (1866-1915)

Gopal Krishan Gokhale was born at Kohlapur in 1866 He possessed remarkable qualities of head and heart and rose rapidly in life He became a graduate at 18, a professor at 20, a member of the Bombay Legislative Council at 22 and President of the Indian National Congress at 39 He had an enormous capacity for hard work His knowledge was vast, varied and exact He was a master of direct expression and lucid exposition Gokhale was so intellectually honest that he would never utter an opinion except after cross-examining himself severely

He started his life as a teacher as a follower of justice Ranade Dr Zacharias rightly points out that never had a Guru a more apt pupil than Ranade in Gokhale He imbibed the spirit of the master and

never wavered from the path of moderation and sweet-reasonableness as laid down by Ranade He joined the Deccan Education Society and very soon he became the Principal of the Fergusson College For about 20 years, he worked on a nominal salary of Rs 70 per month He became the editor of the Quarterly Journal of the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha in 1887 Later on he became the Honorary Secretary of the Deccan Sabha In 1897, he went to England to give evidence before the Welby Commission on Indian expenditure He attacked Salt Tax as levied in India on account of tire suffering which was caused to the poor people He criticised the policy of the Government in excluding the Indians from the higher jobs in the country He condemned the partition of Bengal and bitterly observed thus Then all I can say is goodbye to all hope of cooperating, in any way with bureaucracy, in the interests of the people In 1905, he went to England to do propaganda on behalf of India, He went to South Africa and helped Mahatma Gandhi in his work and no wonder it was on his suggestion that Mahatma Gandhi decided to come to India to start his public life in this country In 1905, Gokhale founded the Servants of India Society for the purpose of training public workers pledged to work for the Motherland on a pittance and subject to rules of rigid discipline as well as loyalty to the Empire In the preamble to the constitution of the Society A sufficient number of our countrymen must now come forward to devote themselves to the cause in the spirit in which religious work is undertaken Public life must be spiritualized Love of the country must fill the heart that all else shall appear as of little moment by its side

Gokhale had always a soft corner in his heart for the starving, shrunken, shrivelled-up ryot toiling and moiling from dawn to dark to earn his scanty meal,

patient, resigned, forbearing beyond measure, entirely voiceless in the Parliament of his Rulers and meekly prepared to bear whatever burdens God and man might be pleased to impose upon his back

There are different views with regard to the place of Gokhale in the history of national development in India While the Extremists in India dubbed him as a 'faint-hearted Moderate who was prepared to be a willing tool in the hands of the British Government, the reactionaries described him as a "seditionist in disguise" As a matter of fact, he was neither a revolutionary nor a reactionary He hated both the extremes, He was a constructive statesman who understood and fought for the rights and liberties of the people of India, but he was not prepared to ignore or belittle the difficulties of the Government of India While he emphasized on the Government the necessity of understanding the point of view of the Indians, he requested the latter to move cautiously The people disparaged his moderation and the Government deprecated his extremism His role was that of a unifier and reconciler His view was that while both Britain and India stood to lose by mutual jealousies and hatred a lot could be gained by goodwill and healthy cooperation The Englishman who imagines that India can be governed much lot the same lines as in the past, and the Indian who thinks that he must seek a destiny for his country outside this Empire, of which now, for better or worse, we are a part—both alike show an inadequate appreciation of the realities of the present situation

Gokhale attached, great importance to the maintenance of law and order and was ready to grant the Government of India extraordinary powers to cope with the situation Although the Indian Press Act, 1910, was a drastic step on the part of the

Government, of India, and was condemned by the public opinion in the country, he supported the bill in the Imperial Legislature in these words "My Lord, in ordinary times I should have deemed it my duty to resist such proposals to the utmost of my power The risks involved in them are grave and obvious But in view of the situation that exists in several parts of the country today, I have reluctantly come, after a careful and anxious consideration, to the conclusion that I should not be justified in opposing the principle of this Bill It is not merely the assassinations that have taken place, or the conspiracies that have come to light, or the political dacoities that are being committed that fill me with anxiety The air in many places is still thick with ideas that are undoubtedly antagonistic to the unquestioned continuance of British rule, with which our hopes of a peaceful evolution are bound up, and this is a feature of the situation quite as serious as anything else Several causes have contributed to produce this result of which the writings in a section of the press have been one And to the extent to which a remedy can be applied to these writings by such executive action as is contemplated in the Bill, I am not prepared to say that the remedy should not be applied " He made a similar statement in 1911, Addressing the Council, he remarked "Why, My Lord, even if I would defeat the Government today I would not do it, I would not do it for this reason the prestige of the Government is an important asset at the present stage of the country and I would not lightly disturb it "

If he asked the people of India to move slowly, he impressed upon the Government the necessity of following the progressive policy towards India No wonder, he moved Lord Morley to grant immediately an instalment of reforms with a view to winning over a

part of the people on the side of the Government The part played by Gokhale in the passage of the Minto-Morley Reforms is well-known He referred to the reforms at the Madras session of the Indian National Congress as a "large and gene roils concession" by the Government to the people of India He held the view that the people were never interested in disorder and chaos If they were driven to that path, there was always some cause of discontent The wise course to adopt was not one of repression,' but to analyse the Situation and remove the sources of trouble There, is only one way in which the wings of the disaffection can be clipped and that is by the Government pursuing a policy of steady and courageous conciliation The words that he used to praise Lord Minto and Morley as the joint authors of the Reforms of 1909 follow the same line of argument, He said, My Lord, I sincerely believe that Your Lordship and Lord Morley have between you saved India from drifting towards what cannot be described by any other name than chaos For however, strong a Government may be, repression never can put down the aspirations, of a people and never will

Gokhale was a mat master of the possible a construction statesman of the first rank, a bringer together of East and West in the common service of the needy above all, an idealist, a foreseer, a prophet of new era of inter-racial goodwill and co-operation Gokhale was a diplomatist to his fingertips, who knew how to play on the national lyre without offending the official ear Gokhale was the diamond of India, the jewel of Maharashtra and the prince of workers Sir Pherozeshah had seemed to me like the Himalayas unscalable, the Lokmanaya like the ocean one could not easily launch forth on the sea But Gokhale was as the Ganges—it invited one to its bosom In the sphere of politics, the place that Gokhale occupied in my

heart, during his lifetime and occupies even now, has been and is unique Gokhale was the noblest and the best of Congress workers and his patriotism was of the highest and noblest type God has endowed you with extraordinary abilities which you have placed unreservedly at the disposal of your country Gokhale had a politician's head and a sense of executive responsibility

Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920)

Bal Gangadhar Tilak was born on 23rd July 1856 and he died in August 1920 He was born in a Brahmin family in Maharashtra He was a staunch Hindu and was well-versed in the Hindu scriptures He took his law degree in 2879 and in collaboration with Agarkar, started a school tor giving cheap education to the people The Poona New English School founded by them made wonderful progress within a short time In conjunction with other workers, the Kesari and the Maharatta were started He was associated with the foundation of the Deccan Educational Society and the Fergusson College

He started anti-cow killing societies, Akharas and Lathi Clubs with the object of creating among the people of Maharashtra a manly spirit so that they might be able to sacrifice themselves for the freedom of the country He organised the Ganapati Festival and in doing so his Purpose was to infuse among youngmen both religious and patriotic fervour They were to learn to work together with courage, enthusiasm and discipline The Ganapati Festival became more and more popular every year and it brought millions of Maharashtrians together on the same platform It created is them the feeling of oneness It awakened among them a new zeal Tilak also started the Shivaji Movement in 1895 His object was to inspire the youth

of India to follow the example of Shivaji and release India from the Political bondage of the foreigners On the occasion of Shivaji Festival, there were lectures, fencing with Lathis, processions Kathas and singing parties With benevolent intentions Shivaji murdered Afzal Khan for the good of others If thieves enter our house and we have not sufficient strength in our wrists to drive them out, we should without hesitation, shut them up and burn them alive

In 1897, Tilak was arrested for sedition and sentenced to 18 months' rigorous imprisonment by judge Strachey The jury which tried him consisted of 6 Europeans and 3 Indians and all the Europeans found him guilty while all the Indians found him not guilty

In 1908, he was tried for sedition and sentenced to 6 years' imprisonment He was tried by a Jury consisting of 7 Europeans and 2 Indians All the Europeans found him guilty and all the Indians found him not guilty Tilak had to spend 6 years of imprisonment in the Mandalay Jail in Burma, from 1908 to 1914

Tilak brought a suit against Sir Valentine Chirol for libel and personally went to England to conduct that case The Government of India and the British bureaucracy wholeheartedly helped Chirol and no wonder the suit was lost in 1919

When the First World War started in 1914, he asked the people of India to help the British Government to the best of their ability When he did so, he expected a reciprocal gesture from the British Government He continued to follow this policy for two years Instead of any reciprocal gesture on the part of the Government, the authorities in India put all kinds of obstacles in the Home Rule Movement started by

him The workers were not allowed to hold their public meetings The result was that Tilak began to criticise the Government openly His definite stand was that unless the people of India were assured of Home Rule, they must not help the British Government in war

Views on National Language Tilak was the first Congress Leader to suggest that Hindi, written in Devanagari script, should be the national language of India At a Conference of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha held in December 1915 he declared that Devanagari should not only be the common script of the Aryan languages but also of the script of the national language

Tilak was a research scholar of international fame In spite of his being otherwise busy he managed to produce works on the antiquity of the Vedas, The Orion and the Arctic Home of the Vedas Dr Bloomfield of John Hopkins University spoke of the Orion as "unquestionably the literary sensation of the year History, the chronic readjuster, will have our hands uncommonly full to assimilate the results of Tilak's discovery and arrange her paraphernalia in the new perspective " Likewise Tilak's Gita Rashasya which was written during his long imprisonment it Mandalay jail, is a monumental work and is rightly considered as his greatest contribution to philosophical thought In this book , Tilak gave a new interpretation of the Gita He demolished the old theory that a liberated soul had no obligation towards his fellow human-beings Tilak gave the youth of India a new deal to work for, the ideal of selfless and disinterested service in humanity

Philosophy of Defiance The great contribution of Tilak was that he taught the philosophy of defiance to the people of India He was born in an age which can

be described as dark The powerful impact of foreign rule had reduced the people to a state of utter helplessness The failure of the Indian mutiny had broken the will of the people to resist the British Raj It is true that the Indian National Congress was founded in but the British Government did not take it seriously To begin with it, was regarded as something harmless and mildly liberal It passed resolutions of loyalty to the throne and prayed for the safety and prosperity of the British Empire There was not a word of hostile criticism in the resolutions passed by the Congress Nobody can doubt the patriotism of men like Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, justice Ranade and Gokhale, but their vision was limited The Moderates pointed out the defects in the system of British administration in India but they were always afraid of challenging the British authority The result was that their eloquent and fiery speeches left the British rulers cold They knew that their fire did not bum and their flourishing swords had no edge to them

Tilak believed that the policy of the Congress must be changed The must learn to defy authority It must be ready to Make sacrifice for the sake of winning freedom for the country He did not want the people to be violent for the realisation of India's freedom but if India could not be free by peaceful means, there was no harm in using violence as well He believed that the end justifies the means He advocated the programme of Swadeshi and boycott of foreign goods and everything foreign He did not want the Congress to fight for small gains He wanted to fight for the ideal of the independence of the country He started the National Party to change the programme of the Congress It is true that the Moderates had their way up to 1914, particularly because from 1908 to 1914 he was shut up in the

Mandalay jail, but when he came out, the Moderates could not stand against him He carried the day He converted the Congress from the admirers of the British Government into rebels against the British Empire It has rightly been pointed out that Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru were able to rear the grand edifice of Swaraj on the foundation laid by Lokmanya Tilak

There was fire in the speeches of Tilak He was fearless in what he said He did not care for the consequences He was regarded as the most dangerous man by the British Government He has been called the father of Indian unrest The Governor of Bombay wrote thus to the Secretary of State for India in 1908 "He is one of the chief conspirators, perhaps the chief conspirator, against the existence of the British Government in India, all the weak points of which he has made a careful study "His Ganpati Festivals, Shivaji Celebrations, Paisa Fund and National Schools were all instituted for one purpose , the overthrow of British rule "

Tilak had forestalled Gandhi in all the movements that the Mahatma Gandhi launched after Tilak's death no-rent campaign, boycott of government service, prohibition, Swadeshi were all preached and practised by him He talked of complete independence as back as 1897 Again, his was the life divine, and his countrymen elevated him not only to the position of Lokamanya, but adored him even as Tilak Bhagwan In the encircling gloom, he appeared with a torch in his hand

In 1908, the people shouted Tilak Maharaj ki Jai and Chatrapati Tilak Maharaj ki Jai He was regarded as great as Shivaji During the disturbances in Bombay in 1908, a medal was struck having the effigy

of Shivaji on one side and that of Tilak on the other The names of Shivaji and Tilak were frequently coupled together and the latter came to be known as the man who is to expel the British from India According to Swami Shradhanand, "Maharaj Tilak occupies an exalted position among the pioneers of political work who were the first to preach the doctrine of political unity What other hero has suffered so much in the service of the motherland as, this illustrious person has done? Will not the soldiers constituting the army for the service of the motherland bow down before the mandate of this weather-beaten General ?

In 1908, the Morning Leader wrote thus about Tilak There are very few people in England in a position to realise what the arrest of Mr Bal gangadhar Tilak, the National leader of Poona, actually means in India ,His personal power is unapproached by any other politician in the country he dominates the Deccan, his own country, and is adored with a kind of religious fervour by every Extremist from Bombay to the Bay of Bengal The break-up of the National Congress at Surat was his doing, his the mind that conceived, his the mind that expressed, and his the force that has directed the extraordinary movement against which the bureaucracy is now calling up all its resources He is a thinker and fighter in one

Comparison of Tilak and Gokhale Dr Pattabhi Sitaramayya, the famous author of the History of the Indian National Congress, has attempted a comparison of Tilak and Gokhale in these words Tilak and Gokhale were both patriots of the first order Both had made heavy sacrifices in life But their temperaments were widely different from each other Gokhale was a

Moderate and Tilak was an Extremist if we may the language in vogue at that time Gokhale's aim was to improve the existing constitution, Tilak's was to reconstruct it Gokhale had necessarily to fight it Gokhale stood for cooperation wherever possible and opposition wherever necessary Tilak inclined towards a policy of obstruction Gokhale's primary concern was with the administration and its improvement, Tilak's supreme concern was the nation and its upbuilding Gokhale's ideal was love and sacrifice, Tilak's was service and suffering Gokhale's method sought to win the foreigner, Tilak's to replace him Gokhale depended upon others' help, Tilak upon self-help, Gokhale looked to the classes and the intelligentsia, Tilak to the masses and the millions Gokhale's arena was the Council Chamber, Tilak's forum was the village Mandap Gokhale's objective was self-government for which the people had to fit themselves by answering the tests prescribed by the English, Tilak's object was Swaraj which is the birthright of every Indian and which he shall have without let or hindrance from the foreigner Gokhale was on a level with his age, Tilak was in advance of his times

Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948)

Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of Indian Nation, was born on 2nd October 1869 at Porbander in Kathiawar At the age of 79, he was shot dead at Delhi His father was a Dewan at Porbander and Rajkot He was married at the age of 12 At the age of 19, he left for Great Britain to qualify for the Bar Before leaving India, he made a promise to his mother that he would avoid three things, viz, meat, wine and women

After qualifying himself for the Bar, Gandhi began to practise at Rajkot and from there he shifted to Bombay During his stay at Bombay Gandhiji came

into intimate contact with Rajchandra Ravjibhai The latter exercised a tremendous influence on him As a matter of fact, Gandhiji got his first lessons of non-violence and truth front Rajchandra Ravjibhai

Gandhiji went to South Africa in connection with a professional work on behalf of a Mohammedan firm His stay in South Africa was the formative period of his political life It was in South Africa that he put into practice his weapon of Satyagraha He also developed self-confidence to lead a struggle It was in that dark continent that he taught his countrymen to give up fear, resist evil by truth, and never to yield and strive to rise to the full stature of manhood

Gandhi's opportunity came in 1906 when the Asiatic Registration Act was passed by the Government of South Africa That Art required all Asiatics to register themselves and give their thumb impressions This involved a measure of humiliation which was impossible for the Indians to put up with Gandhiji not only protested against this enactment but also led a deputation to England, However, all that brought about no change Under the leadership of Gandhiji, the Indians refused to get themselves registered or give their thumb impressions The result was that thousands of them were sent to jail Gandhi himself was awarded two month imprisonment As the movement was a novel one and the Government found itself helpless, a compromise was arrived at The Indians agreed to get themselves registered voluntarily and Gandhiji was the first to offer himself for registration However, the struggle had to be started once again as the Transvaal authorities refused to carry out their Part of the contract There was a lot of resentment in India against the treatment of the Indians Then the invasion of Transvaal took place Two thousand men marched into Transvaal under, the

leadership of Gandhiji The march was a great landmark It was the march of truth against untruth of justice against injustice and of non-violence against violence A Commission of Inquiry was set up and ultimately the hated Asiatic Act was cancelled The poll-tax was repealed Marriages among the Indians were recognised

Having won his laurels in South Africa, Mahatma Gandhi came to India in 1914 At that time he had complete faith in the love of justice of the Englishmen No wonder, he appealed to the Indians to help the British Government unconditionally It was after 1918 that doubts arose in his mind regarding the ideals of the British rule The passing of the Rowlatt Bill in the teeth of opposition by the people, had profound influence on his mind It became his firm faith that the British rule in India was Satanic

Gandhiji discovered that the British Empire had certain ideals with which have fallen in love and one of those ideals is that every subject of the British Empire has the freest scope for his energies and honour and whatever he thinks is due to his conscience And have found that it is possible for me to be governed least under the British Empire Hence my loyalty to the British Empire To the Viceroy, he wrote thus in 1918 "If I could make my countrymen retrace their steps, I would make them withdraw all the Congress resolutions and not whisper 'home rule' or responsible government during the pendency of the war I would make India offer all her able bodied sons as a sacrifice to the Empire at this critical moment, and I know that India by this very act, would become the most favoured partner and racial distinctions would become a thing of the past " In the same strain was his advice to his countrymen in which he exhorted them "to fight unconditionally unto death with British

for victory and agitate simultaneously also unto death if we must, for the reforms which we desire " The Rowlatt Act, the Punjab disorders and the Khilafat agitation, however, completely shattered his belief in the justice and good faith of England In a letter to the Viceroy written in August 1920 he wrote thus "Events that have happened during the past month have confirmed me in the opinion that the Imperial Government have acted in the Khilafat matter in an unscrupulous, immoral unjust manner, and have been moving from wrong to wrong in order to defend their immorality I can retain neither respect nor affection for such a government Your Excellency's light-hearted treatment of official crime, your exoneration of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Mr Montagu's Despatch, and above all the shameful ignorance of the Punjab events and the callous disregard of the feelings of Indians betrayed by the House of Lords, have filled me with the gravest misgivings regarding the future of the Empire, have estranged me completely from the Present government and have disabled me from rendering, as I have hitherto wholeheartedly rendered, my total co-operation '

A special session of the Congress was held at Calcutta in September 1920, and this session marks the beginning of the Gandhian era Under Gandhiji, the Congress became more and more representative of the people with a distinctive economic, moral, social and political programme and all flowing from the genius of one man Gandhiji's resolution was carried by majority of 1,866 votes against 884

Mahatma Gandhi combined his Non-Co-operation Movement with the Khilafat Movement He believed in the ideal of Hindu-Muslim, unity In spite of this outward co-operation for some time, it was found that there was no union of hearts Differences arose

between the Hindus and Muslims The Moplah revolt in Malabar opened the eyes of the Hindus Riots took place in Bombay on the day the Prince of Wales landed in that city In February 1922, there took place serious rioting ~at Chauri-Chaura near Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh At the place, 21 constables, and one sub-inspector of police were shut up in a police station and burnt alive by a mob The result was that Gandhiji withdrew his Non-Co-operation Movement He was arrested by Government and sentenced to six years' simple imprisonment At his trial, he pleaded guilty to the charge and made the following remark in his reply to the judge Non-violence is the first article of my faith It is the last article of my faith But I had to make my choice, I have either to submit to a, system which I consider has done irreparable harm to my country, or incur the risk of the mad fury of my people bursting forth when they understood the truth from my lips I know that my people have sometimes gone m a d , I am deeply sorry for it, and I am therefore here to submit not to a light penalty but to the highest penalty I do not ask for mercy I do not plead any extenuating act I am here therefore to invite and submit to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is a deliberate crime and what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen

There was a split within the Congress on the question of council entry Motilal Nehru and C R Dass were in favour of the Congress entering the legislatures and fighting the Government from, within also However, a compromise was arrived at after some time and the Swarajist party got its blessings

From then onwards, Mahatma Gandhi continued to dominate not only the Congress but also the entire politics of the country His position was absolutely

unchallenged In 1931, he went to London to attend the Second Round Table Conference, but came back empty-handed on account of the attitude of the British Government and Mr Jinnah On many occasions, he decided to fast into death for various causes India won her independence on 15th August 1947 under his leadership but he himself was murdered on 30th January 1948 by a fanatical Hindu

Mahatma Gandhi has rightly been called the Father of the Nation He was in every sense of the word the creator of modern India It was under him that India won her independence It is true that Tilak had anticipated him by advocating a policy of strong action against the British Government instead of a policy of mendicancy as followed by the Moderates in India, but it cannot be denied that it was under Gandhiji that the nationalist movement in India became a mass movement and not a movement of the mere intelligentsia of India He followed various methods to achieve his ends He started the Non-Co-operation Movement He started the Civil Disobedience Movement He violated the laws of the country It was under him that the Congress passed the, Quit India Resolution He fasted He courted arrest He defied the might of the British Empire But he did all this with one object and that was the liberation of this country

Nagendranath Gupta has summed up the contribution of Mahatma Gandhi to the nationalist movement in India in these words "The movement led, by Mahatma Gandhi has brought into Prominence some of the greatest that India has known in recent times, men who would be considered great, in any country at any time If Mahatma Gandhi is the Prophet, they are undoubtedly his apostles The national movement in India may easily be divided into two phases, one before Mahatma Gandhi had the

Indian National Congress and the other after he became the most conspicuous figure in it In the earlier stage, Congressmen confined themselves to agitation and oratory, to ever-repeated assertion of then birth-right to Home Rule and severe criticism of Governmental action, to constitutionalism and reformism Only the very greatest of them risked and sacrificed everything for achieving their goal The rank and file were passive onlookers and onhearers, so to say This might have gone on for any number of years without any prospect of freedom tor India Then clime Mahatma Gandhi with his experience if the Transvaal, has spiritual outlook, his gentle nature and his inflexible will There were willing hearts in India waiting for his call and they at once realised the nature of the struggle that lay ahead of them Since then the struggle for national freedom in India has grown ever wider and today it comprehends the entire nation, it has been a glorious record which is being added day after day of sacrifice and suffering of women that vied with men in offering themselves as sacrifices at the altar of liberty The old caution and timidity have disappeared for ever, the prison has lost its hardships and degradation, and there are no signs of hesitation or reluctance to suffer Men or women are filled with the spirit of martyrdom and the determination to win by suffering what was hitherto accomplished by violence

Mahatma Gandhi put great emphasis on communal unity He believed that both the Hindus and Muslims must live as brothers and sisters in the country and in his efforts to do so he lost his life also When after the Khilafat Movement in India, relations became bitter between the Hindu and Muslims on account of the atrocities committed by the Muslims over the Hindus in various parts of India, Mahatma

Gandhi went on a 21 days fast in September 1924 as a penance The communal situation deteriorated in India in 1946 and 1947 as a result of the policy of Direct Action followed by the Muslim League Then took place the Calcutta Killing in August 1946 Something worse than that happened in Noakhali There were repercussions in Bihar and Gurhmukteswar Then there were riots in Rawalpindi, Lahore etc When the partition of India took place in August 1947, there was a wholesale killing of Hindus and Muslims by one another All this was painful to Mahatma Gandhi instead of participating in the celebrations held in Delhi on 15th August, 1947, at the time of transfer of power by the Englishmen into the bands of the Indians, Mahatma Gandhi decided to go to Noakhali in East Bengal Bare-footed, he walked from village to village and tried to restore peace to that area He did not care for his life which could be finished at any time by any Muslim After restoring peace there, he came back to Bihar and persuaded the Hindus to take back the Muslims who had left their homes in fear After that, he went to Calcutta and although he was mobbed by the Hindus, he was able to stop the fury of the people against the Muslims It was the fast of Mahatma Gandhi for 72 hours that brought about the change of atmosphere in Calcutta In the words of Lord Mountbatten, What fifty thousand well-equipped soldiers could not do, the Mahatma has done—he has brought peace He is a one-man boundary force After Calcutta, Mahatma Gandhi came to Delhi where the Hindus were determined to turn out the Muslims from the Capital of India, Lakhs of Hindu refugees had come to Delhi from West Pakistan and they clamoured for the turning out of the Muslims from Delhi to make room for them They would have succeeded in their object if Mahatma Gandhi had not come to Delhi for next few days Mahatma Gandhi refused to allow the

Hindus out the Muslims He went on a fast and demanded that the Hindus must allow the Muslim to live in Delhi The mosques of the were restored to them and the Muslims were allowed to live in peace

Mahatmaji was a great social reformer He took up the cause of the depressed classes in India and devoted the whole of his life to this noble mission He asked the Hindus to give up their old prejudices against the depressed classes He asked them to open their temples for their worship He himself lived in their quarters Instead of calling them depressed classes, he gave them the name of Harijans or the people of God He started a newspaper entitled The Harijan and himself edited the same during his lifetime He regarded un-touchability as a curse to Hindu society and the same was abolished in the Indian Constitution framed After the independence of India He believed that one of the methods of improving the lot of the poor Indians was to stop the habit of drinking in the country and that is why he advocated the policy of prohibition He was not ignorant of the fact that the policy of prohibition was bound to result in the loss of crores of rupees to the revenues of the Government but he was prepared to make that sacrifice in the higher interests of the country as a whole He advocated the rights of women and stood for giving them equal status with men Among his associates were not only men must also women and some of them are today occupying very high places in the country

Gandhiji believed that the present system of education was not suitable to a poor country like India He was in favour of a more utilitarian system of education It was, under his guidance that the Wardha Scheme of education was adopted The children were

to get not only the knowledge of three R's but also learn some art which was to help them while studying

Mahatma Gandhi stood for Swadeshi As a matter of fact, this was one of the weapons in his armoury against the British He believed that he would be able to bring the Englishmen to their knees by persuading the Indians to boycott the foreign goods The stopping of the Manchester and Lancashire mills was bound to hit the Englishmen economically The adoption of Swdeshi was bound to save millions of rupees to the people of India Mahatma Gandhi put the greatest emphasis on the use of Khadi as that was bound to add to the income of the poor people in this country

Mahatmaji was not in favour of wholesale industrialisation of the on the lines of the West As a matter of fact, he advocated the establishment of cottage industries He rightly believed that cottage industries could go a long way in raising the standard of the poor people in the countryside The setting up of more mills was bound to result in capitalism and great inequality of wealth The lot of the poor was not going to improve thereby Mahatmaji, a friend of the labourers, was always supporting their legitimate claims However, he was opposed to the method of strikes as that was not in the interest of the country as a whole

Estimate

Mahatma Gandhi was known all over the world and no wonder tributes were paid to the greatness of the saint of Sabarmati It is desirable to refer to some of them Gandhi is a superb judge of other men His humanity is one of the profoundest things that history has seen He has pity and love for every race, and most of all for the poor and oppressed Mahatma Gandhi raised up three hundred millions of his fellowmen, shaken the

British Empire and inaugurated in human politics the most powerful movement the whole world has seen for nearly two thousand years The symbol of unanimous wish for freedom is Mahatma Gandhi He does not represent all of India, but he does rettect the will of all India for national liberation A great man is like good sculpture, made of one piece A great man lives a single tracked life Lincoln was great, he lived for the Union Lenin was great, he lived in order to raise Russia out of the feudal mire Churchill is great because all of his acts have been directed towards the reservation of England as a first class power And in the same way Gandhi is great because every single act that he performs is calculated to promote the one goal of his life—the liberation of India He is not the man, he has no intention and never had, to rule India or administer India His function ends when he frees India Gandhi is the father of India's defiance and its symbol Gandhi walks to sea to make salt in defiance of the British It becomes a popular pilgrimage The idealism of the youth spills into it So does the leaderless nation's yearning for a leader Gandhi has given his followers the elation of standing up to a foreigner who is the master in their house

Few men in all history who by their personal character and example have been able deeply to influence the thought of their generation There has been no greater spiritual leader in the world in our own times The Mahatma is more right when he is wrong than we are when we are right Many of us are correct in our little correctness and are small in the process But the Mahatma was incorrect in many things and yet correct in the sum-total and big in the very inconsistencies In the end, he seldom or never came out at the wrong place Is it not strange that although Mahatma Gandhi is the leader of a

movement of political freedom, he has never been compared to such great national leaders as Rienze, Mirabeau, Washington, Hampden, Mazzini, Sun-Yat-Sen or Zaghlul Pasha? Yet he has been repeatedly and widely compared to great religious teachers like Zoroaster, Buddha and Christ, or a saint like St Francis or Assisi What political leader has observed fast for twenty-one days to do penance for is country and the warring factions of hit countrymen?"

Mahatma Gandhi's contribution to Indian politics has been immense The Indian National Congress had been in existence for thirty years when he returned to India finally from South Africa in 1915 The Congress had aroused and organised national consciousness to a certain extent, but the awakening was confined largely to the English educated middle classes and had not penetrated the masses He carried it to the masses and made it a mass movement Mahatma Gandhi's movement operated both horizontally and vertically He took up causes which were not entirely political but which touched very intimately the life of large masses of people Mahatma Gandhi's greatest contribution, however, does not consist in making the masses of India politically self-conscious and organising them on a scale they had never before been organised To my mind his greatest contribution to Indian and politics and perhaps to suffering humanity in the world at large lies in the unique method which he has prescribed and employed for fighting wrongs He its taught us how it is possible for us to successful fight the mighty British Empire without arms, he has given us and the world a moral substitute for war He has lifted politics from the plane of sophistication and untruths where at its worst it generated into low intrigue and at its highest could not rise beyond diplomatic circumlocutions and secret diplomacy, to

the pitch of high idealism in which the end, however noble, can in no circumstances justify recourse to means which are not pure and immaculate He has placed truth on its pedestal of glory even in politics, no matter how harmful its effect appears to be at the movement His knew and deliberate exposure of ugly or weak spots in ourselves to our so-called enemies has confounded both friends and opponents alike But he considers our strength lies not in concealing our weakness but in knowing and combating it The rigorous observance of non-violence, even where temporary advantages may apparently be gained by ignorance or mitigating it, has been recognised by experience to be not only the straightest course but also the wisest policy It was moral and spiritual fervour of his teaching which at once caught the imagination of the people, who saw and recognized that when all was dark around he showed us the way out of our misery and slavery When we were feeling utterly helpless, he made us realise our own strength and Non-violence

62

History of Education

When the English East India Company acquired territories in various parts of India, it found that both the Hindus and the Muslims had their educational institutions which were linked up with their religion The Pandits taught Sanskrit to the Hindus in their Pathshalas and the Maulvis taught the Muslims in the mosques To begin with, the Company left the Indian system undisturbed and respected the endowments made by the Indian rulers However, Warren Hastings established the Calcutta Madrassah "to qualify the sons of Mohammedan gentlemen for responsible and lucrative offices in the State " The subjects taught were theology, logic, rhetoric, grammar, law, natural philosophy, astronomy, geometry, and arithmetic A few years later, John Owen, Chaplain to the Bengal Presidency, requested the Government to establish schools for the purpose of teaching English "to the natives of these provinces Nobody cared for his request, However, after a few years, another educational institution was set up at Banaras "for the preservation and cultivation of the Laws, Literature and Religion of the nation, to accomplish the same purpose for the Hindus as the Madrassah for the Mohammedans, and specially to supply qualified Hindu Assistants to European judges "

In 1792-93, when the House of Commons debated the renewal of the Charter of he East India Company, Wilberforce carried a resolution emphasising the

adoption of such steps as would lead to the advancement in useful knowledge of the people of India, He suggested the sending of school masters and missionaries to India, The move of Wilberforce was opposed and it was maintained that the Hindus had "as good a system of faith and morals as most people " It was pointed out that it would be madness to give them any kind of learning other than what they possessed

After a few years, Charles Grant, one of the Directors of the company, submitted a memorandum it, which he lamented the low moral condition of the people of India He asked the company to improve their condition by imparting to them a knowledge of the English language which was to serve as "a key which will open to them a world of new ideas " As the Muslim rulers had taught Persian to the Indians, in the same way the Englishmen should teach English to the people of India To quote him, "It would be extremely easy for Government to establish, at moderate expense, in various parts of provinces, places of gratuitous instruction in reading and writing English, multitudes, especial of the young, would flock to them, and the essay books used in teaching might at the same time convey obvious truths on different subjects The Hindus would, in time, become teachers of English themselves, and the employment of our language in public business, for which every political reason remains in full force, would, in the course of another generation, make it very general throughout the country There is nothing wanting to the success of this plan, but the hearty patronage of Government "

In 1811, Lord Minto regretted the neglect of literature and science in India and suggested improvements in existing colleges in addition to the establishment of new ones A clause was inserted in

the Charter Act of 1813 stipulating that "a sum of not less than one lakh of rupees in each year shall be set apart and applied to the revival and improvement of literature and for the introduction and promotion of knowledge of the sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories in India

Raja Ram Mohan Roy formed an association for founding an institution where the Hindus were to receive instruction in European languages and sciences The Hindu College was founded in 1817 In 1818, the Bishop of Calcutta opened an institution which was to serve the double purpose of training young Christians as preachers and of imparting a knowledge of the English language to Hindus and Muslims, Raja Ram Mohan Roy opposed the establishment of a Sanskrit College at Calcutta, However, nobody bothered about this protest The Court of Directors of the Company were happy at the prospect of having qualified Indians to help them in the administration To quote them, "As the means of bringing about this most desirable object, we rely chiefly on their becoming through a familiarity with the European literature and science, imbued with the ideas and feelings of civilized Europeon the ample cultivation of their understanding, and specifically on their instruction in the principles of moral and general jurisprudence"

Elphinstone in his Minute of 1823 urged the establishment of schools for teaching English and European sciences In a communication to the Commissioners for Indian Affairs, Elphinstone wrote thus "I conceive it is more important to impart a high degree of education to the upper classes than to diffuse a much lower sort of it among the common people, The most important branch of education is that designed to prepare natives for public employment If English

could be at all diffused among persons who had the least time for reflection, the progress of knowledge by means of it would be accelerated in a tenfold ratio since every man who made himself acquainted with a science through English would be able to communicate it in his own language to his countrymen " He proposed the establishment of a school at Bombay where English might be taught "classically" and where instruction might also be given in that language on history, geography and science In 1833, he set up a similar school at Poona In 1834 was started the Elphinstone College at Bombay I was expected to train "a class of persons qualified by their intelligence and morality for high employment in the civil administration of India "

By this time, demand for the study of English had increased tremendously English books were being sold by thousands There was practically no demand for Sanskrit and Arabic books In order to satisfy the popular demand, English classes were attached to the Calcutta Madrassah and the Sanskrit College at Calcutta The same was done in the Agra college which was established in 1811 In spite of that, the oriental colleges were not popular There started a controversy as to whether instructions should be given through English or through Arabic or Persian The Anglicists maintained that all instruction should be given through English, The orientalists insisted on teaching through the oriental languages To settle the controversy the Government appointed a committee Among the orientalists were many distinguished officers of the Government and their view prevailed for some time When Lord Macaulay was appointed the chairman of the committee in 1835, the parties were so evenly balanced that things had come to a deadlock, Lord Macaulay wrote a Minute which turned the

scales against the orientalists He discussed the Charter Act of 1813 which provided a sum of money for the revival and promotion of literature and for the introduction of the knowledge of sciences among the inhabitants of India He disputed the view that by literature parnament could have meant only rabic and Sanskrit literature as he had not yet found an orientalist "who could deny that a single 'shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia " His argument was that English was the Imp, age spoken by the ruling class It was likely to become the language of commerce throughout the seats of East He came to the conclusion that the Government was free to employ its funds in teaching what was better worth knowing than Sanskrit or Arabic, "Neither as the languages of law nor as the languages of religions have Sanskrit or Arabic any peculiar claim to our encouragement," and "it is possible to make natives of the country thoroughly good English scholars " to which end efforts should be directed Lord Macaulay had expressed similar views in the House of Commons before he came to India To quote him, "Are we to keep the people of India ignorant in order that we may keep them submissive? or do we think that we can give knowledge without awakening ambition ? or do we mean to awaken ambition and provide it with no legitimate vent? It may be that the public mind of India may expand under our system until it has outgrown that system, that by good Government we may educate our subjects into a capacity for better government, that having become instructed in European knowledge, they may, in some future age, demand European institutions Whether such 3 day will ever come I know, not Whenever it comes it will be the proudest day in English history The sceptre may pass away from us Victory may be inconstant to

our arms But there are triumphs which are followed by no reverse There is no empire exempt front all natural causes of decay There triumphs are the pacific triumphs of reason over barbarism, the ernpire is the imperishable empire of our arts and our morals, out literature and ours laws " Again, "The question before us is simply whether, when its in our power to teach this language—English—we shall teach language in which, by universal confession, there are no books on any subjects which deserve to be compared to our own, whether, when we can teach European science, we shall teach systems which, by universal confession, wherever they differ from those of Europe, differ for the worse, and whether, when we patronise sound philosophy and true history, we shall countenance, at the public expense, medical doctrines which would disgrace an English farrier, astronomy which would move laughter in the girls at an English boarding school, history abounding with kings thirty feet high and reigns thirty thousand years long, and geography made up to seas of treacle and seas of butter "

Lord William Bentinck, the Governor-General, approved of the Minute of Lord Macaulay, A resolution was passed on 7th March 1835 and the following points were ermphasised in that resolution

That the great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science amongst the natives of India and that all funds appropriated for the purposes of education would be best employed on English education alone That while the colleges of oriental learning were not to be abolished the practice of supporting their students during their period of education was to be discontinued That Government Funds were not to be spent on the printing of oriental works and that all the funds at the disposal of the Government would hence

forth be spent in imparting to the Indians a knowledge of English literature and science

The proposal to appropriate all the funds to English education, there was a petition from the Mohammedans of Calcutta, signed by about 8,000 people, including all the most respectable Maulvis and native gentlemen of the city After objecting to it upon general principles, they said that the evident object of the Government was the conversion of the natives, and they encouraged English exclusively and discouraged Mohammedan and Hindu studies because they wanted to induce the people to become Christians With a view to removing the misgivings of the Muslims, Lord William Bentinck declared a policy of strict neutrality "In all schools and colleges, interference and injudicious tempering with the religious belief of the students, mingling direct or indirect teaching of Christianity with the system of instruction, ought to be positively forbidden "

A reference may be made to the work done by the Christian Missions in the field of education In 1716, tire Danish missionaries opened an institution for the training of teachers In 1717, they opened two charity schools at Madras They were also instrumental in opening English schools at other places, Missionaries like Carey, Marshman and Ward started their work at Serampore in 1793 By 1820, the Missionary societies were doing a lot of work in this field, but their primary object was not to educate the people, but to preach Christianity, The Missionaries', realised that the spread of English language would help the spread of Christianity in the country In Bombay was started the Wilson College and in Madras the Christian College In 1853 was "founded the Saint John's College at Agra Missionary colleges were also, founded at Masaulipatam and Nagpur The Bible Classes were

made Compulsory in these institution One great object was to convey, as largely as possible, a knowledge of our ordinary improved literature and science to the young persons, but another, and a more vital object was to convey a thorough knowledge of Christianity with its evidences and doctrines our purpose was, therefore, to combine in close, inseparable and harmonious union, what has been called a useful secular with a decidedly religious education

Government Resolution of 1844 provided that for public employment in every case, preference would be given to those who had been educated in Western science and were familiar with the English language

Sir Charles Wood's Despatch to the Court of Directors has been described as, "The Magna Carta of English Education in India," It set forth a scheme of education far wider and more comprehensive than any one which had been suggested so far It enunciated the aim of education as the diffusion of Arts, Science, Philosophy and the literature of Europe, The study of Indian languages was to be encouraged The English language was to be taught wherever there was a, demand for it, Both the English language and the Indian languages were to be regarded as the media for the diffusion of European knowledge

It was felt that the time had come for the establishment of universities in India which might encourage a regular and liberal course of education by conferring academic degrees as evidence of attainment in the different branches of Science and Art It was decided to establish universities on the model of the London University Each university was to consist of a Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor and a Senate The Senate was to manage the university funds and frame regulations for the holding of examinations

Professorships were to be instituted in various branches of learning among which were law, civil engineering and classical oriental languages Calcutta and Bombay were to have the first universities A university might be created at Madras also or at any other place in India where a sufficient number of institutions existed from which properly qualified candidates for degrees could be supplied It was laid down that the affiliated institutions would be periodically visited by Government Inspectors It was hoped that a spirit of healthy rivalry could grow among the educational institutions, and the division of university degrees and distinctions into different branches would direct the effort, of highly educated men to the studies which were necessary to success in the various active professions of life

The Despatch also recommended the establishment of institutions for training teachers for all classes of schools The existing Government Schools and Colleges were to be maintained and, their number was to be increased if and when necessary New Middle Schools were to be esiablished More attention was to I be given to elementary education The system of grants-in-aid was to be started by the Government to help private enterprise However, these grants were to be given on the principle of religious neutrality A comprehensive system of scholarship was to be started Female education was to be encouraged by the Government A Director of Public Instruction was to be appointed in every province He was to be assisted by Inspectors and Assistants or Deputy Inspectors According to Prof Dodwell the men in charge of the Department were primarily administrators and consequently education tended to become a matter of routine administration

In 1882, Lord Ripon appointed a Commssion "to enquire into the manner in which effect had been giver, to the principles of the Despatches of 1854 and to suggest such measures as it may think desirable in order to the further carrying out of the policy therein laid down" The Hunter Commission collected a lot of useful information and made the following recommendations

While advocating the gradual withdrawal of the State from direct support and management of institutions of higher education, the Commission felt that this withdrawal could only be by slow and cautious steps A College or a Secondary School was to be handed over to the Indians provided there was a reasonable prospect that the cause of education would not suffer through the transfer Provision was to be made for ordinary and special grants to Colleges There were to be alternative courses in the large colleges Certain general principles were to he followed as regards college fees and exemption from them New regulations regarding scholarships were to be framed An attempt was to be made to prepare a model textbook based upon the fundamental principles of natural religion such as may be taught in all Government and non-government colleges The principal or one of the professors in each Government and aided college, was to deliver to each of the college classes, in every session, a series of lectures on the duties of a man and a citizen Special measures were to be adopted for the encouragement of education among the Mohammedans All elementary schools were to be inspected and supervised by the Educational Officers of the Government The Commission put emphasis on physical and mental education of the students Primary education needed strongest encouragement A part of the provincial

revenues should be exclusively reserved for primary education, Primary education should be given by the State, district boards, and municipalities Secondary education should be encouraged through local or private bodies All secondary schools should be made over to private management wherever that is possible

The Government of India accepted the recommendations of the Commission and directed the preparation of an annual report reviewing the progress of education in the country, Higher education progressed at great speed during the next few decades

In January 1902, Lord Curzon appointed a Commission to "enquire into the conditions and prospects of the universities established in British India, to consider and report upon any proposals which may have been or may be made for approving their construction and working, and to recommend such measures as may tend to elevate the standard of university teaching, and to promote the advancement of learning " The Commission made the following recommendations

The legal powers of the older universities should be enlarged and all the universities be recognised as teaching bodies, The local limits of each university should be more accurately defined and steps taken to remove from the Calcutta list the affiliated colleges in C P , U P , etc The Senate, the Syndicate and the Faculties should be reorganised and made more representative than before The affiliation rules should be framed in such a way as to secure that no institution shall be admitted to affiliation unless on the fullest information, and that no institution once admitted be allowed to fall below the standards of efficiency required for affiliation and the Syndicate should satisfy itself from time to time on this point

There should be a properly constituted governing, body for each college Attention should be paid to tire residence and discipline of students The courses and methods of examination in all subjects should be changed according to the suggestions made in tire Report

The Government of Lord Curzon accepted the recommendations of the Raleigh Commission and embodied them in the Universities Act of 1904 The Act reconstituted the governing bodies of the universities The Senate of the university was to have not less than 50 and not more than 100 members The number of elected fellows was fixed at 20 for Universities of Calcutta Bombay and Madras and 15 for the other two Statutory recognition was given to the Syndirates with adequate representation of university teachers on them Conditions for affiliation to the university were clear laid down and were intended to be rigorously observed The University Was given the power of making provision for the instruction of students through the appointment of university professors and lecturers and, tend to the promotion of study and research The Government was vested with certain powers regarding the regulations to be framed by the Senates and the Governor-General-in-Council was empowered to define the territorial limits of the universities

Under a Viceroy who was a great autocrat with an overwhelming faith in the efficiency of Government machinery, the chief' purpose of the Act of 1904 was to tighten the hold of the Government on the Universities, and in the first place on their Senates, which were still retained as the ruling bodies, by their total number whilst increasing to an overwhelming majority proportion of those nominated by the

Chancellor and giving *ex-officio* seats on them to Provincial Directors of Public Instruction In the Syndicates, which were the executive bodies, provision, at first sight effective was made for a large number of college teachers, but none was eligible who was not already a member of the Senate Increased powers of supervision over existing colleges and the imposition of more stringent conditions for the affiliation of new ones, were steps in the right direction, but they came too late and made no attempt to deal with the fungus growths which, in so many schools , were rotting the foundations on which a sound college education could be built up New faculties were created to deal with the university curricula and with the methods of university examinations, but these were also to be mere examinations from the Senate. Practically nothing was henceforth to be done without the approval of Government

The Public opinion in India was very critical of this Act as the number of seats in the Senate thrown open to elections was very small and the restriction of numbers was supposed to create a majority for Europeans, The provisions for the exercise of teaching functions by the University were not considered very important as such provisions in the previous Acts had not been utilized The new regulations for affiliation of colleges were regarded as a means to hamper Indian private effort in the field of education

Although Lord Curzon disavowed all intentions of turning the universities into State departments or to "fetter the colleges and schools with bureaucratic handcuffs," yet the main result of the passing of the Act was to Europeanise the Senates and Syndicates of the universities and to turn them into some of "the most completely Governmental Universities of the world " This was recognised by the Calcutta University

Commission What Lord Curzon intended to do was to assert the doctrine of State responsibility and control in matters of university education The Indianopposition was based on the growing conviction that Lord Curzon was bent upon restricting the opportunities for higher education open to young Indians Educated Indians sincerely thought that the Viceroy meant to deal a blow at the university system The source of the greatest controversy of Lord Curzon's viceroyalty which produced bitterness among the leaders of Indian opinion and which was responsible for making the Viceroy most unpopular with the educated classes in India, was the Act of 1904

A Government Resolution was issued in 1913 and this clarified the policy with regard to higher education, As India would not be able to dispense altogether with the affiliating universities for a long time It was necessary to restrict the area over which such universities would have control New teaching and residential universities were to be established within every province Teaching universities were to be established at, Dacca, Aligarh and Banaras New affiliating universities were to be established at Rangoon, Patna and Nagpur The outbreak of the World War delayed the implementation of the Resolution, but universities were started at Banaras and Patna in 1916 and 1917

The Government of India in the time or Lord Chelmsford appointed the Sadler Commission for the purpose of holding an inquiry of a very comprehensive and searching character into the problems of the Calcutta university The terms of reference included all aspects of collegiate and university education Problems of secondary education were not excluded from the scope of inquiry The Commission was expected to study the organisation and working of

other Indian Universities with a view to helping it to formulate the policy of the Calcutta University The Commission submitted a voluminous Report in 1919 dealing practically with every problem of secondary and university education, The main recommendations of the Sadler Commission were as follows

The intermediate classes of the university were to be transferred to secondary institutions and the stage of admission to the university was to be that of the existing Intermediate Examination Secondary and intermediate education was to be controlled by a Board of Secondary Education and not by university The Government of India should cease to have any special relationship to the University of Calcutta and the Government of Bengal should take its place The duration of the Degree Course should be three years after the Intermediate stage, the provisions being applied immediately in regard to Honours Courses and soon after to Pass Courses The teaching resources of the City of Calcutta were to be organised to create a real teaching university and the project of a university at Dacca was to be carried into effect at the earliest possible moment The mofussil colleges were to be organised in such a way as would encourage the gradual rise of new university centres by the concentration of higher teaching in at a few points Special attention was to be paid to the education of women and a Board was to be created for that purpose The Government service system being unsuitable, for universities, a new Organisation of the teaching service in universities was necessary Problems of vocational and professional training including that of teachers, lawyers, medical men, engineers, architects and agriculturists were to be seriously taken in hand by the university and numerous reforms were suggested for that purpose

The medium of instruction for most subjects up to High School stage was to be the vernacular, but for later stages, it was to be English The method of examinations required complete overhauling The Government of India drafted a Bill to enforce the recommendations of the Commission However, financial difficulties stood in the way in 1920, the recommendations of the Commission were forwarded to the Provincial Governments by the Government of India The Dacca University and Lucknow University were started in 1920 on unitary teaching lines The Allahabad University was started in 1921 and Delhi University was started in 1922 on the same lines

Under the Government of India Act, 1919, the department of education was transferred into the hands of the Indian Ministers responsible to the Provincial Legislatures However, the Government of India controlled and guided the, general policy of higher education Under the Government of India Act, 1935, entire university education was placed under the control of the Provincial Governments, The only exception was in the case of a university which functioned irk two provinces

Sergeant scheme for education This scheme was prepared by Sir John Sergeant, the Educational Adviser to the Government of India It sought to introduce universal, free and compulsory education for boys and girls between the ages of 6 and 14 The scheme was estimated to cost Rs 200 crores a year This basic education was to consist of two stages the junior stage covering 5 years and the senior stage covering 3 years After the primary stage, all the boys and girls were not to be allowed to go to the High Schools Only those were to he allowed to proceed who were expected to profit from higher education Approximately, one out of every five was expected to

join the High Schools Schools were to be maintained out of public funds as far as possible, Restrictions were also to be placed or, the admission of students into colleges, Intermediate course was to be included in the High School course, and the college teaching was to last for three years, A national youth movement was to, be started throughout the country The movement was to teach the young men to build their bodies and serve their country,

Radhakrishnan Commission

The Government of India appointed in 1948 a University Commission under the Chairmanship of Sir S Radhakrishnan The Commission submitted its report in 1949 The Commission made detailed recommendation, regarding the teaching staff and their service conditions, the standard of teaching, research, professional education and examinations It recommended higher salaries and better service conditions It also recommended, the opening of occupational institutions, refresher courses, increase in working hours, the prescribing of good text books, improving of library facilities and setting up of laboratories It put emphasis oil acquaintance with one's physical environment, introduction of basic ideas of science effective use of language, appreciation of higher values and social cooperation It laid stress on increased facilities for postgraduate research and teaching It advocated more facilities for the study of professional courses like agriculture, commerce etc

The Commission recommended that pre-University education should be of 12 years duration More funds should be allocated by the Government for education, More scholarships and stipends should be given to students No college should admit more than 1000 students 'There should be no hasty replacement,

of English as the medium of instruction for higher education Examination standards should be raised and made uniform in all the Universities University education should be put it in the Concurrent List in the Constitution of India To look a after University Education in the country, a University Grants Commission should be set up Rural Universities should be established oil the model of Shantiniketan and Jamia Millia

University Grants Commission

Most of the recommendations of the Radhakrishnan Report were accepted by the Government of India In 1956, the Parliament of India passed the University Grants Commission Act, which provided for the appointment of a University Grants Commission by the Central Government Nine members of the Commission are appointed by the Central Government Every member holds office for a period of six years, It is the duty of the Commission to take all such steps as it may think fit for the promotion and coordination of University education and for the determination and maintenance of standards of teaching, examination and research in the Universities For the purpose of ascertaining the financial needs of a university or its standards of teaching examination and research, the Commission can cause an inspection of any Department or Departments If a university does not comply with the recommendations of the Commission, the latter can withhold is grant to that University

Secondary Education Commission

In 1952, the Union Government appointed the Secondary Education Commission under the Chairmanship of Dr A Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, Vice-Chancellor of Madras University The Commission submitted its report in August 1953 The major

recommendations of the Commission were the installation of higher secondary system with diversified courses, the three language formula, the emphasis on educational and vocational guidance improvement in the system of education, in the teaching staff, and in the methods of teaching Those recommendations were discussed by the certral Advisory Board of Education and accepted with certain modifications A scheme of higher secondary education was launched all over India, The All-India Council of Secondary Education was set up at the Centre The National Council of Educational Research and Training was established at the Centre for guiding education at its various,, levels, developing special aspects of education and providing educational guidance and facilities, to the states

Kothari commission

An Education Commission was appointed fly the Government of India in July 1964 to "advise the Government on the national pattern of education and on the general principles and policies for the development of education in all states and in all aspects" Dr D S Kothari was appointed its Chairman Distinguished educationists and scientists from the United Kingdom, the United States, and the Soviet Union were associated with it The UNESCO Secretariat made available the services of J F McDougall who served as Associate Secretary of the Commission The Commission submitted its report on 30 June 1966

The Commission recommended that tuition fee at the primary stage should be abolished in all Government, local authority and private schools as early as possible Free text books and writing material should be provided, at the primary stage Steps should

be taken to ensure at the end of the lower primary stage that no promising child is prevented from continuing his studies further and to this end, a scholarship of an adequate amount should be provided to every child who may need it Special attention should be paid to the education of women, handicapped children, backward classes, backward tribes, tribal people and scheduled castes Allocations for the construction of school building should be increased in Central and State budgets

The Commission emphasized the need for an urgent reforms in education to relate it to the life, needs and aspirations of the people and thereby make it a powerful instrument of social, economic and cultural transformation Education should be so developed as to increase productivity, achieve social and national integration, accelerate the process of modernisation and cultivate social, moral and spiritual values Guidance and counselling should be regarded as an integral part of education Guidance should begin from, the lowest class in the primary school Teachers should be oriented to the special techniques of dealing with talented children, specially for providing an atmosphere for free expression and creative work The Commission made certain recommendations regarding university education and education of the handicapped The Government accepted most of the recommendations of the Commission

Largely based on the recommendations of the Kothari Commission, the Government of India adopted a resolution on education which put emphasis on free and compulsory education upto the age of 14, improved status and emoluments of teachers, adoption of three-language formula education for agriculture and industry etc

63

Renaissance in India

Renaissance means revival or rebirth Etymologically, the term Renaissance consists of the Latin re plus nasci meaning "again' and "to be born " The Renaissance in India was not like the Renaissance in Europe It was not a return to India of the past It was essentially a matter of spirit which produced striking changes in the realm of religion, society and culture alongwith a demand for national regeneration There arose a new self-consciousness among the people of India The soul of India began to untold itself and break the shackles of the past It is maintained that the Renaissance stirred the Indian soul to its very depths and Modern India owes everything to the Renaissance which was followed by reformation movements all over India It also paved the way to national regeneration The spirit of Renaissance and the subsequent reform movements affected almost all the aspects of national life There were new developments in religious, social and political life There were new trends in the fields of education literature, fine arts and science The view of Sir Jadunath Sarkar is that the Indian Renaissance was at first an intellectual awakening which profoundly affected our literature, education, thought and art

In the next succeeding generation, it became a moral force and reformed the Indian society and religion In the third generation, it brought about the economic modernisation of India and ultimately the political emancipation

In his book, Sri Aurobindo has attempted an analysis of the Renaissance in India He points out that the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in India were periods of political decline, defeat and anarchy which practically killed the creative spirit in religion and art India began to imitate Europe and forgot her own achievements in the past However, the life-breath of the nation moved as a subordinate under current in the religious movements of Bengal and Punjab, in the political aspirations of Maharashtra and the literary activity of Bengal

Sri Aurobindo points out the Renaissance in India in the nineteenth century had three aspects In the first place, it aimed at a recovery of the old spiritual gospel contained in the scared books of the country The researches of European Indologists helped the people in the West and in India to understand and appreciate the achievements of the Indians in the past Philosophers and thinkers like Schopenhauer, Emerson, Thoreau and Royce highly praised India's wisdom in the past Indian saints and mystic leaders in India also helped the same process Secondly, this re-invigorated spirituality inspired fresh activity in the fields of philosophy, literature, art etc Thirdly, an attempt was made to deal in an original way with modern problems in the light of the new inspiration Sri Aurobindo did not compare the Indian Renaissance with the European Renaissance of the fifteenth century He compared it to the Celtic Renaissance when Ireland wanted to go back to the older culture after a long period of British domination In his, analysis of the Indian Renaissance, Sri Aurobindo put great emphasis on the recovery of the spiritual traditions and heritage of the past According to him, the establishment of new religious sects in India was a central event in the Indian Renaissance The Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj, Ramakrishna Paramhans and Vivekananda, the neo-

Vaishnavism of Bengal and the Renaissance in Islam tried to go back to the past and recover the light of old wisdom Sri Aurobindo referred to the cosmopolitanism, eclecticism, religious rationalism and logic of the Brahmo Samaj Of all the leaders of the Renaissance in India, Dayananda appealed most to Sri Aurobindo He considered him as a unique personality which created a vigorous Aryan Manhood in India Aurobindo found a national instinct in the reliance of Dayananda on Vedic wisdom To quote Aurobindo, Dayananda bring back an old Aryan element into the national character " Aurobindo gave credit to Theosophical Society for getting some recognition in the West for some of the psychic, occult and esoteric achievements of the old Hindus According to Aurobindo, Ramakrishna Paramhans was the man who had the greatest influence and has done the most to regenerate Bengal ' Vivekananda proclaimed to tire world that India was awake not only of exist but also to conquer In India itself, Vivekananda was a leader who wanted preservation by reconstruction " Aurobindo also referred to the achievements of J C Bose and Rabindranath Tagore in the field of Indian Renaissance Aurobindo believed that the spiritual and intellectual advance of India was bound to come To quote him, "The Renaissance in India is as inevitable as, rising of tomorrow's Sun and the Renaissance of a great nation of three hundred millions with so peculiar a temperament, such unique traditions and ideas of life So powerful an intelligence and so great a mass of potential energies cannot bit be one, of the most formidable phenomena of the modern world "

Before the Renaissance in India in the nineteenth century, the condition of India was very bad In the words of H G Rawlinson, "General condition of India in the eighteenth century was perhaps the unhappiest in the chequered history of the country " Particularly after the

death of Aurangeb, the Mughal Empire disintegrated rapidly There was anarchy and chaos in the country The Marathas spread their power in the North and carried fire and sword in the countryside The Pindaries carried on their raids and destruction The prestige of the Mughal Empire was completely gone after the sack of Delhi ‘by Nadir Shah in 17,19 There was anarchy in the Punjab and the Sikh Misls were fighting for supremacy with one another There was no law and order in the Punjab till Maharaja Ranjit Singh established his authority in the beginning of the nineteenth century The invasions of Ahmed Shah Abdali further added to the confusion in the country Ahmed Shah Abdali defeated the Marathas in the third battle of Panipat in 1761 Ali Vardi Khan set up an independent state in Bengal but the same was brought tinder their control by the English East India Company in the second half of the eighteenth century The Nizam, Hyder Ali and Sultan Tipu were fighting among, themselves and also against the British, Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the English East India Company started establishing its authority in Bengal and the Deccan but still their position was shaky There was no settled Government or a regular system of administration

As a result of lawlessness and anarchy, the material prosperity of the people was destroyed Trade and communications were interrupted The fine arts declined The condition of the common man was miserable To quote, In social, usage, in politics, in the realm of religion and art, we had entered the zone of uncreative habit of decadent traditions and ceased to exercise our humanity" It was indeed a dark age in every way and nothing of great importance was produced at that time All indigenous arts and crafts declined There was no place for reason in religion which was flooded by meaningless ceremonies and rites Superstitions and dogma were all

powerful The people were pessimistic and found no hope in the future They became fatalists Their vision became narrow, Their Eves were miserable

There was no safety of life and property There were mercenaries and soldiers of fortune who roamed about in the country and murdered and plundered at will Agriculture, industry and trade were utterly ruined There was no strong political power in tire country to defend her against the foreign invaders In a way, the old order was dead and, there was nothing in sight to take its place

British impact

It was at this time that India tame into contact with the West and that completely changed her British imperialism helped the process of the unification of the country The British brought the entire country under the control of a single administration They unified the country by introducing a uniform system of laws and Government The introduction of the modern methods of communication and transport produced a unifying effect The new industries were all-India in their scope for the sources of their raw materials and their markets, Even their labour force was recruited on a wide inter-regional basis The economic life and lot of the Indian people got interlinked and their economic life became a single whole The two new classes born in India at that time were the capitalist class and the working class and they were all-India in character and stood above the traditional divisions of caste, region and religion

The highly centralised character of British rule in India promoted the growth of Indian nationalism Centralisation meant not only the subordination of the Governments of various provinces and the Indian states to the Central Government, it also involved uniform and sometimes even common laws, institutions and taxes for the whole country The Government of India was "one

and indivisible" and its actions often had the effect of encouraging the people of India to feet that they too were or should be one and indivisible

The introduction of the English language was an event of great importance in the history of India It went a long way in transforming the ideas and mentality of the people of India English education broke the intellectual isolation of the Indian mind and brought it into close contact with literature, philosophy, economics, politics, history and science of the West It broadened the outlook of the Indians who got new progressive Social and political ideas of the West in place of mythical geography, superstitions and rituals, legendary history, tyrannical monarchy and pseudo science

The English language made the Indians the inheritors of a great literature which was full of great ideas and ideals Tagore writes, "We had come to know England through her glorious literature which had brought new inspiration into our young lives The English authors whose books and poems we studied were full of love for humanity, justice and freedom This great literary tradition had come down to us from the revolutionary period We felt its power in Wordsworth's sonnets about human liberty We glorified in it even in the immature production of Shelley written in the enthusiasm of his youth when he declared against the tyranny of priestcraft and preached the overthrow of all despotisms through the power of suffering bravely endured All this fired our youthful imaginations We believed with all our simple faith that even if we rebelled against foreign rule, we should have the sympathy of the West We felt that England was on our side in wishing to gain our freedom " Again, "It was chivalrous West which trained the enthusiasm of knight-errants ready to take upon themselves the cause of the oppressed, of those who suffered from the miserliness of their fate and we felt certain that the special mission of

Western civilization was to bring emancipation of all kinds to all races of the world Though the West came to our shores as cunning tradesmen, it brought with it also the voice and a literature which claimed justice for all humanity"

The view of K M Panikkar is that the introduction of English language helped the cause of unity in the country and without it India would have been split into as many different units as there are languages in India According to Dadabhai Naoroji, "The introduction of English education with its great, noble, elevating and civilising literature and advanced science will for ever remain a monument of good work done in India and a claim to gratitude upon the Indian people" The view of Surendranath Banerjee is that English language was the means of uniting the varied races and religious, the peoples and complexities of our multiform civilisation in the golden chains of indissoluble union It was our common means of communication, North, South, East and West According, to Sir Henry Cotton, the English language served to unite the varying forces among the Indian people No other bond of unity was possible The view of C Sankaran Nair is that the teaching of English in India helped the Indians to acquire English conceptions of duty, rights and brotherhood To quote M Shyama Shankai, "Let the manifold blessings that English education has conferred on India be written in letters of gold and preserved in the shrines of grateful Indian hearts for all ages to come It is English education that has arrested the course of degeneracy in India It is English language that has awakened her from her slumber under her fast gathering ignorance and inertia She is knowing herself knowing her glorious past and the grand destiny that awaits her in the future" Dr A R Desai points out that the study of the English language unfolded the treasures of democratic and nationalist

thought crystallized in precious scientific works Their study clarified, made more vivid and even fanned into fire the nascent nationalism of the educated Indians Knowledge the English language also brought within the reach of an educated, Indian the most vital portion of the scientific, philosophical, sociological and literary achievements of the non-English speaking peoples Through English translations, he could study Plato, Arigtotle, Spinoza, Kant, Auguste Comte, Nietzsche, Hegel, Benedetto Croce, Spengler, Karl Marx, Machiavelli, St Simon, Bakunin, Proudhon etc and was bound to be influenced by them This widened his outlook and enabled him to think and dream of India as a part of world community Dr S R Mehrotra writes that English education not only enabled the Indians to absorb European ideas but also provided them with new and powerful means of inter regional solidarity English replaced Sanskrit, Persian or Hindustani as the lingua franca of the educated classes in India

Another factor which helped the Renaissance was the coming of that Christian missionaries in India from the beginning of the nineteenth century They spread not only Christianity but also education in the country They opened schools and colleges and set up printing presses in the country They opened hospitals and started other works of public charity As a result of their activities, there spread a lot of scepticism among the Indians some of whom were converted to Christianity However, in the long run, the activities of the missionaries and their condemnation of Hindu religion resulted in a strong reaction among the Hindus and that the establishment of the Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, Ramkrishna Mission etc

Another factor that helped the Renaissance was the press in India The printing presses helped the publication of a large number of books which facilitated the task of education among the people Newspapers and periodicals

were also started and they played their part in awakening the people

The establishment of the All-India services like the Indian Civil Service etc and the provincial services like the Revenue and judicial Services, bound together the various units of India in a manner never attempted before and created the steel-frame within which the administrative unification of India 'became a reality The creation of the Indian Army by the British, though recruited and officered by them mainly in their own interest, also proved to be an integrating force Recruited as it was from the various parts of the country and organised on a non-political basis, the Indian Army built up a glorious reputation on three Continents and provided free India with the basis of a national defence force

The British in India constructed a large number of railways and roads which opened the interior and linked up various parts of the country But for the railways, motor buses and other modern means ok communication, political and cultural life on a national scale in India would not have been possible They played an important part in organising the political movement of the Indian people on a national scale To quote Dr A R Desai, "Modern means of transport were a formidable force in unifying the Indian people socially The locomotive, triumphantly traversing a big physical distance, also helped to annihilate the social distance dividing the people living in different parts " The roads 'built by the British in India included a number of trunk roads stretching diagonally across the country Their measurement went into thousands of miles They formed a frame-work linking most of the important centres of population, industries, trade and strategic points and subsidiary roads This medium of transport became an important factor in the growth of a unified national economy It created a national consciousness in the mercantile classes of India

Traders and craftsmen frequently journeyed from place to place and began to take interest in the emotional integration of India Besides the upper classes, the mass of lower classes were also mobilised Like the railways, the road transport made possible the mass migration of people from one place to another To get new employment or to improve their prospects, the poor people often used road transport from North to South and East to West, That resulted in social and cultural cohesion

The changes brought about by the British in the field of law also helped the cause of the Renaissance K M Pannier writes, "The establishment of the great principle of equality of all before law, in a country where under the Hindu doctrines a Brahman could not be punished on the evidence of Sudras and even punishments varied according to caste and where according to Muslim law an unbeliever's testimony could not be accepted against a Muslim, was itself a legal revolution of the first importance"

The view of B C Pal is that The Code and the Criminal Procedure Code have set up standard of personal freedom that was unknown, truth to say, both to Hindu and Muslim criminal law and administration, The Criminal Procedure Code secures special privileges for European British born subjects in India But so far as after natives of the country are concerned, it has no room for any differential treatment as between one man and another In the eyes of the British law, the Zamindari and the Ryot, the Brahmin and the Pariah, the prince and the peasant are equal The stupendous mass upheaval which we see about us, today could never have happened but for the levelling down process of the British law and administration which paid no regard to distinction of caste or rank or wealth among the people"

The result was that there developed among the people a critical outlook on the past and new aspirations for the future Reason and judgement took the place of faith and belief Superstition wielded to science Immobility was replaced by progress Optimism and a determination to go ahead replaced the old apathy and inertia on the part of the people They were ready to remove the abuses from society and open a new chapter in the country

Indologists

It is true that English education had an adverse effect on some sections of the Indians, but by the large it led to a better appreciation by Indian of their past glory and attainments The great Orientalists who established the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1783, have earned from all Indians a lasting debt, of gratitude for their pioneering work in the field of re-discovering India's great intellectual heritage "Although the Orientalists were defeated on the question of educational policy, their high evaluation of India" Classical heritage helped eventually to foster in English Indians a pride in their own past which was of cardinal importance in the nineteenth century Renaissance of Hinduism and the rise of Hindu nationalism

Indian writers

The writings at Dinabandhra Mitra, Hem Chandra Banerjee, Navin Chandra Sen (1849-1909), Rabindranath Tagore, D L Roy, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Bharatendu Harishchandra, Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar, Ram Mohan Roy, Rajendra Lai Mitra (1824-1891), Sir R G Bitandarkai, flara Prasad Sastri, R C Dutt, Tilak CLC affected the minds of the people of India In 1860, Dinabandbu Mitra produced in his book entitled "Nila Darpan" (Mirror of Indigo) a scathing satire on the indigo planters of Bengal Hem Chandra Banerjee (1838-1903)

"voiced in his national Iyrio, the sense of impotence of his people to assert their legitimate rights and self-respect against their British masters " B C Pal writes, "Hem Chandra however, was our special favourite The intense patriotic passion that breathed through his poems captured our youthful mind in a way that no other Bengali poems had done The new generation of English educated Bengalees had already commenced to advance themselves to positions of trust and responsibility in the new administration It the learned professions of law and medicine also, they were gradually asserting themselves as against, the British members A new spirit of independence and self was increasingly manifesting itself in the conduct and of the English-educated Bengalees, All these had already commenced to provoke a racial conflict in the country Hem Chandra was a special sense the poet of this new conflict and of the racial respect and sensitive patriotism born of it " Govinda Chandra Roy gave expression to his feelings of patriotism in some of his most it touching songs

Through his writings, Rabindranath Tagore, (1861-1941) appealed to the higher sentiments of the people of India to work for the glory of their country He tried to raise the moral tone of his communion He interpreted in a unique was the true spirit of Indian culture and civilisation To quote Ramsay MacDonald, "Tagore's poetry is India It is the product of his devotion to Indian culture It is the soul of a people not merely the emotion of a man, a systematic view of life, not merely a poetic mood a culture, not merely a tune

The greatest contribution of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee (1938-1894) was that he raised nationalism to the dignity of a religion He was convinced that nothing could move the hearts of the Indians more than religion and therefore he pleaded patriotism as the highest religion He identified the Motherland with Durga, Laxmi

and Saraswati As a matter, of fact, he gave a new orientation to image worship by symbolising the goddess as the Motherland To quote Bankim Chandra, "It is Thy image we raise in every temple," In his Anand Math, Bankim Chandra gave a new image of the Coddes Kali To quote him, "Kali is the symbol of degradation of India She is black in colour because of the intense misery of the country She is naked because India had been denuded of all her wealth She wears the garland of human skulls because the whole, country has become a vast Burial ground She has Siva under her feet to show that Indians are trampling down their own welfare " Bankim Chandra was the inspired sage

The Anand Math of Bankim Chandra which embodies the patriotic song "Bande Mataram" (Hail to the Mother 1) has rightly been called "the Bible of modern Bengalee patriotism," The view of B C Pal is that Bankim Clandra was a prophet of Indian cultural Renaissance Aurobindo Ghose wrote thus 'As a poet and a stylist, Bankim did a work of supreme national importance not for the whole of India but for Bengal which was destined to lead India and be the vanguard of national development " Bankim was a "seer and a nation-builder" and "one of the makers of modern India "

The literary and cultural heritage of Bengal was also enriched by Madbusudan Dutt (1828-73), Matimohan Bose and Girish Chandra Madhusudan Dutt wrote Sarmishta, Tilottma and Meghnad Vadh Kavya

Vishnu Krishna Chiplunkar (1850-1882) was a great writer and he called himself The Shivaji of the Marathi language " He wrote bitter Titicirms of Mahadev Govinda Ranade, Gopal Hari Deshmukh and Swami Dayananda He made his literary contributions through the Kavyetihasasamgraha and the Nibandhamala He was regarded as the Brihaspati of the Marathi literature, He

compared Western education to "the milk of the cigress" because it inspired sentiments of virility and liberty, However, he was opposed wholesale imitation of the West as he had a deep love for the institutions traditions and culture of Maharashtra He stood for "education for the masses and took an active part in founding the Kesari and the Mahratta, the two Weeklies of Maharashtra As a writer, journalist, educator and a founder of the two presses, Chiplunkar was a very important figure in Maharashtra and he tried to arouse the latent patriotic sentiments of the people of Maharashtra He was a selfless patriot and his place in Maharashtra call be compared to that of Bankim Chandra in Bengal

Sir R G Bhandarkar (1837-1927) obtained recognition throughout India as a great Indologist and a Sanskrit scholar He attained world-wide fame He was keenly interelated in social reform

Ramohan Roy and Brahmo Samaj

A very important effect of the contact of Western culture in India was that it instilled into the minds of the Indians a spirit of rational enquiry into the basis of their religion and society That spirit was typified the personality of Raja Rammohan Ray (1772-1833) The Raja wits a man of unusual intellectual ability He was a profound scholar of Sanskrit and Persian and a great admirer of British culture He was one of those who felt that India had everything to gain from contact with the West and he tried to imbibe the best that West could offer He took a leading part in starting the English medium schools in Bengal through which the youth could acquire the most modern Indian education He introduced rationalistic principles in social and religious ideas He was the founder of the Brahma Sabha which developed into the Brahmo Samaj This organisation was the first deliberate attempt in modern India to reform Hinduism and restore it

to ıts pnstıne glory, The maın emphasıs of the Raȷa was on socıal reform ın order to purge Hındu socıety of the evıls prevaılıng ın ıt He attacked the strongest part of the cıtadel of Hındu relıgıon and socıety He opposed the worshıp of ımages of gods and goddesses, denounced Satı and abuses of the caste system He favoured the, remarrıage of wıdows He repudıated the prohıbıtıon of crossıng the sea by hıs voyage to England By these successıve shocks, he tned to reform Hındu socıety

He was the pıoneer of polıtıcal reform ın modern Indıa It ıs contended that the lıberal movements for relıgıous and socıal reform were closely connected wıth the movement for polıtıcal emancıpatıon

Debendranath Tagore (1817-1905) was an assocıate of Raȷa Rammohan Roy and after hıs death, he took up the leadershıp of the reform movement, He was a man of deep learnıng and spırıtual poıse He wıelded great ıntellectual authorıty ın the Brahmo Samaȷ He "proclaımed the supremacy of human reason whıch was ın ıts ongınal ınstıtutıons really the Vernal of God reflected through the mınd of man 'over all scnptures and hallowed ınȷunctıons "

Another leader of the Brahmo Samaȷ was Keshab Chandra Sen He was deeply ınfluenced by Chrıstıanıty He gathered around hımself a group of younger men who were zealous not only ın propagatıng the reform of Hınduısm but also ın socıal servıce such as famıne relıef Gradually, a nft developed between the old conservatıve group and the Brahımo Samaȷ and the young reformers led by Keshab Chandra Sen Ultımately, there was a splıt The old party led by Debendranath Tagore came to be known as the Adı Brahmo Samaȷ In 1868, Keshab Chandra Serı founded the Brahmo Samaȷ of Indıa In 1871, he dıed In 1878, the Sadharan Brahmo Santa', was founded by some of hıs followers

Although the Brahmo Samaj was the visible embodiment of the new spirit, it never became a powerful movement It began to lose its importance in less that all a century after its foundation However, it effectively help the progress of Hindu society by stemming the tide of conversion to Christianity, by holding a living example of society based on progressive and liberal ideas and by supplying eminent persons who advanced liberal ideas in other spheres of life such as politics

The Prarthana Samaj

In 1849 was started in 'Maharashtra a society called - the Paramhans Samaj Its influence was restricted and it broke up very soon Another organisation was started by Dr Atmaram Pandurang (1823-1898) in 1867 with the object of rational worship and Social reform The name of the society was the Prarthana Samaj in 1870, R G Bhandarkar and Ranade joined the Prarthana Samaj and strengthened it The two main planks of the Samaj were theistic worship and social reform Its greatest service was the organisation of social reform movement It laid emphasis on the abandonment of caste, introduction of widow-remarriage, encouragement of female education and the abolition of Purdah and child marriage In the words of Miss Collet The Prarthana Samaj "never detached itself so far from the, Hindu element of Brahmanism as many of the Bengalee Samajes and both in religious observances, and- social customs, it clings far more closely to the old models " Another writer describes the Prarthana Samaj as composed of men paying allegiance to Hinduism and to the Hindu society with a protest

The Arya Samaj

Unlike the Brahmo Samaj with its leanings towards Christianity, the Arya Samaj founded in 1875 by Swami Dayananda (1824-1883) who is considered by Sri

Aurobindo as "one of its great and formative spirits," was a true Hindu Protestant Reformation The slogan of Dayananda was "Back to the Vedas," He stood for the pristine purity of Vedic Hinduism He announced all post-Vedic Hindu scriptures such as the Puranas the Brahmanas and even the Upnishadas He attacked Vedantism Trantricism and-popular Pauranic Hinduism He condemned caste distinctions and advocated full equality for women with men He started a violent campaign against untouchability

Swami Dayananda was a remarkable human dynamo endowed with ordinary power and energy His Arya Samaj succeeded in shaking the whole structure of Hinduism in the Punjab The view of Sir S Radhakrisan" that Swami Dayananda played an important role in the spiritual uplift of the people and kindled the fire of patriotism among them He was a great social reformer He preached social equality between man and woman All modern social legislation had been inspired by his teachings His teachings were based oh reason He advised the people against blind faith and asked them to examine everything and formulate their own opinions about the merits and demerits of religious beliefs and social customs He was perhaps the first Indian to preach the gospel of Swadeshi and "India for the Indian He anticipated Mahatma Gandhi in his constructive work

The view of de Reincourt is that there is little doubt today that the great revolt in Bengal in 1905 was largely the indirect result of the Arya Samaj's religious nationalism and that Dayanandand organisation was the first real concrete nucleus of political nationalism The Arya Samaj showed that Hinduism, long hibernating in a self-enclosed world of its own, was beginning rapidly to awake and face the realities of the nineteenth century It also revealed that there was fire within the great body of Hinduism which, if stock by a competent hand, could be

coaxed into a blaze of life and energy" The concept of the gentle and often servile Hindu began to disappear "

Theosophical Society

The Theosophical Society was, founded in- the United States of America in 1875 by Madame H P Blavatsky (1831-91) and Colonel H S Olcott along- with others In 1879, Blavatsky and Olcott came to India and established the headquarters of their Society at Adyar near Madras The Theosophical Society became prominent in the time of Mrs Annie Besant who joined the society in 1989 and came to India in 1893 She dedicated her whole life to the cause of the Society She explained her mission in these words The Indian work is, first of all, the revival strengthening and uplifting of ancient religions-Hinduism, Zoroastrianism and in Cyclon and Burma, Buddhism This brought with it a new self-respect, a pride in the past, a, belief in the future and, as an inevitable result, a great wave of patriotic life, the beginning of the-rebuilding of -a nation " She started the Central Hindu School at Banaras which later on developed into the Banaras Hindu University

The fundamental philosophical doctrines of the Theosophical Society, such as Karma and Nirvana, were common to both Buddhism and Brahmanism and hence the Indians were attracted towards it The English educated Indians had a special reason to welcome Theosophy Most of them had no faith in the many current religious and social doctrines, customs and traditions but had not the courage to openly repudiate them for fear of social estracism They were "condemned to live in an agonising' mental and moral conflict," They found in Theosophy a veritable gospel of peace and salvation " By subtle philosophical theories of graded, elevation of man by stages, Theosophy defended the current practices of Hinduism It reconciled the ideal of

universal brotherhood with the caste system and the fundamental unity of the Supreme Being with the worship of numerous gods and goddesses of Hinduism By these means, Theosophy helped very materially to remove the "inferiority complex" from the minds of educated Indian The great work of Theosophy was "in the moral reclamation of many of these educated Hindus who readily accepted the somewhat rigid disciplines of the new cult that demanded of its votaries complete abstinence from intoxicating drinks and absolute social purity for the attainment of that high, level of and spiritual power which it promised "

Ramakrishna Paramhams

The life and teachings of Ramakrishna Paramhams and Swami Vivekananda-two spiritual giants-constitute a fascinating and inspiring chapter in the history of modern Indian thought Ramkrishna (1836-1886) whose original name was Gangadhar Chattopadhaya, was born in the village of Kamarpukur in the Hoogly District of West Bengal At an early age, he began, showing unusual signs of religious ecstasy At the age came to Calcutta, to live with his brother who had been appointed the priest of a viewly erected temple at Dakshineshwar an the banks of the Ganges Ramakrishna started his career of spiritual disciplines and attainments as a devotee of the great Goddess Kali

During his stay at Dakshineshwar, Ramakrishna experienced profound spiritual developments, He bad visions, trances, and ecstasies Most of his time was spent in spiritual rhapsodies He had a craving to see God face to face and he was successful in his mission He adopted the spiritual practices of Islam and Christianity and he had fruitful spiritual experiences The cumulative effect of these experiences was that he came to the conclusion that all spiritual paths within and without

Hınduısm, ıf correctly followed, lead to the same goal Hıs fame began to spread far and wıde and all kınds of people came to see hım The rıch and the poor, the educated and the ıllıterate, the vıllager and the Calcutta cıty-dweller, all were drawn to hıs place The secret of hıs attractıon was that he was a spırıtually realısed saınt

Among those who came to see hım were the great lıterary and cultural figures of contemporary Bengal-men lıke Mıchael Madhu Sudan Dutt Ishwar Chandra Vıdyasagar, Debendranath Tagore and Keshab Chandra Sen All those who Carne to see hım were gıven the same message They were asked not to waste theır tıme ın partısan squabble over the superıorıty of thıs or that creed, or thıs or that relıgıon They were advısed to seek God wıth a pure and dedıcated heart Ramakrıshna showed by hıs practıcal example that Hınduısm was not an archaıc and dyıng Relıgıon Actıng as a mıghty spırıtual beacon, he generated a powerful current of fresh lıfe ınto Hındu socıety He was not concerned wıth caste or creed, wıth empty ceremonıes or shallow rıtuals He was the apostle of dıvıne realısatıon He created a spırıtual revolutıon

Swamı Vıvekananda (1863-1902)

The greatest dıscıple of Ramakrıshna Pararmhans was Swamı Vıvekananda who carrıed the message of hıs Master all over Indıa Europe and Amerıca In 1893, he attended the Parlıament of Relıgıous held ın Chıcago He created a sensatıon ın the great assembly by hıs brıllıance and nobılıty He came back to India ın 1897 and was gıven a here, ıs welcome

On hıs return to Indıa, he undertook a tour from Kanyakumarı to Kashmır and delıvered lectures wherever he went In those lecture" be thundered agaınst the evıl practıces ın Hındu socıety and called upon the people to leave no stone unturned to make theır future brıght, he

made them realise the greatness of India in the past and gave them fresh hopes for the future He insisted on character-building, discipline and strength of mind He brought about a new life among the people He inspired, them to work for the glory of their country

It is clear from above that the nineteenth century witnessed a profound Renaissance in India which was brought about mainly as a result of the British impact The great social reform leaders and movements all combined to bring about an intellectual social, cultural and spiritual ferment which shook Hindu society to its depths and gave birth to the national movement in the country

There was a spiritual movement in India led by Sri Aurobindo in the beginning of the twentieth century It interpreted Indian Renaissance as the rebirth of the soul of India into a new body of enthusiasm and energy, a new form of its innate and ancient spirit It put emphasis on the greater and nobler action of the spiritual motive in every sphere of Indian life It aimed at magnanimous achievements and higher activity which ends in the discovery, expression and manifestation of the Divine Self in human being The mental, emotional and aesthetic parts and inborn potentiality of being were to be unfolded and developed fully for their greater satisfaction and finer nature of human beings The movement found "in all-round spirituality the master-key not only to unlock the treasures of the past but also to remould the present on the basis of true appraisal both of the East and the West "

It is worthy of notice that "at first, the revived Hinduism was on its defence, rather cautions and timid in maintaining its position and inclined to compromise with the enemy But soon it took the offensive, marched forward and even entered the hostile camp and asserted

in ringing tones its right to live as one of the civilising influences mankind"

As a result of these religious movements, there arose in this period a number of reformers, teachers, saints and scholars who purified Hinduism by denouncing some of its later accretions, separated its essentials from non-essentials, confirmed its ancient truths by their own experience and even carried its message to Europe and America They were able to view their religion apart from the mythological, ritualistic and sociological forms in which it was embedded They successfully interpreted Hinduism and its religious philosophy and main principles independent of Indian caste system, mythology external rites and ceremonies It was due to all this that today Hinduism is as fresh, vitalizing and vigorous as it was in any of the periods previously The old fear that Hinduism might be overshadowed by Christianity or eclipsed by western civilisation and culture exists no longer It has successfully outlived the Christian missionary propaganda of modern age as it survived the Muslim religious persecution of the Medieval period and the religious schism caused by Buddhism and Jainism in ancient times It is now capable enough to meet any of the modern religions of the world on equal footing as their friend and ally in a common cause "If the world in its present distracted state needs spiritual message and looks for a light to guide its footsteps in the darkness that has enveloped its path, renascent India is in a position to give it through the greatest of her prophets"

As a result of the efforts of the Brahmo Samaj and Raja Ram Mohan Roy the Arya Samaj and Dayanand, the Prarthna Samaj and Ranade, the Ramakrishna Mission and Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, Maharishi Raman and Mahatma Gandhi, many social reforms were carried out in Hindu society The Sati system wits abolished Infanticide disappeared, Women were given

education and freedom Child marriage has been declared illegal Widow marriage has been made legal Monogamy has become the order of the day Polygamy has become rare, Purdah system has disappeared, inter-caste marriages are being performed The ban on inter-dining has been lifted Every effort is being made to remove untouchability from Hindu society The Renaissance has enabled the Indians to pay more attention to life on earth and promote the general material and moral prosperity of the people

Vernacular Literature

A significant feature of the Renaissance was the rapid growth of Vernacular literature in India Bengal took the lead in this matter The names of the distinguished writers in Bengali are Ram Mohan Roy, Akshay Kumar Dutta, Iswarchandra Vidyasagar, Devendranath Tagore, Madhusudan Dutta, Rajnarain Bose, Dwijendralal Roy and Bankim Chandra Chatterjee These writes were a prelude to the rise of Rabindranath Tagore who contributed to 41 aspects of culture and literature viz , prose, poetry, drama, novel, essay, short story, music, painting, dancing etc Dr Mohammad Iqbal wrote in Urdu and Persian Munshi Prem Chand wrote in Hindi and Urdu Sarat Chandra Chatterjee wrote in Bengali Bharatendu Harishchandra and Maithili Sharan Gupta wrote in Hindi Likewise, a lot of writing was done in Gujarati, Marathi, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Kanarese, Urdu and Punjabi

The prose literature in Indian vernaculars began with the translation of English prose works Indian writers wrote essays in the light of Western ideology They imitated Western style and theme in, their writings They applied Western methods of study to oriental literature Indian drama was considerably influenced by Western drama The style, technique and theme of, the Western

play-writers like Ibson, Galsworthy and Bernard Shaw were imitated by, Indian writers. The growth of One Act Play in Indian literature was the result of Western literary influence. The works of writers like Laxminarain Mishra, Govinda Pant, Ashka, Premi, Udai Shanker Bhatt, Kailasbnath Bhatnagar, Seth Govind Das etc. show the influence of Western drama. Indian story and novel were profoundly influenced by Western literature. Poetry was also influenced. English sonnet, ode and blank verse were imitated. Madhusudan Dutta in Bengali and Ayodhya Singh Upadhvaya in Hindi achieved marvellous success in blank verse. English lyrics were followed. English thought and style were imitated in poems on love and mysticism.

Spirit of Research and Discovery

Another striking feature of the Indian Renaissance manifested itself in the scientific spirit of research and discovery. The Preservation of Ancient Monuments Act was passed in the time of Lord Curzon. Under the guidance of the Archaeological Department of the Government of India and other research institutions and organisations, a large number of excavations have been undertaken on the pre-historic sites like Mohenjodaro, Harappa, Nalanda, Kausambi, Hastinapur, Ropar, Kalibangan and Lothal. A lot of material of historical importance is now available as a result of these excavations and the reading and decipherment of ancient inscriptions.

The discoveries of Shri Ramanujam in the field of pure Mathematics and of Sir Jadgish Chandra Bose in another branch of science are real and substantial contributions of new India to the knowledge of the world. Sir CN. Raman and Dr. Meghnad Saha have made outstanding contributions in Physics. Shri P.C. Ray, I.C. Ghose and Dr. S.S. Bhatnagar made their contribution in

the field of chemical science S Chandrasekhar has made his contribution in the field of astronomy S C Roy and Birbal Sahni have made their contributions to scientific knowledge

Fine Arts

The spirit of the Renaissance had also its influence on fine arts in India The first efforts at original production were to, import Western models wholesale' for presenting Indian motifs The lead came from Travancore and Poona This was resented by Bengal which made a bold the conventions of the Buddhist school This stimulated the study of old Indian art as practised through different periods and in different areas The discovery of the Gandhara art and the Gupta art created a sense of pride among the people In this connection, Annie Besant says that India rediscovered herself and got once again what "is the admiration of the world for its sublime spirituality, its intense devotion and its depth of intellectual insight, a culture which had endured for unknown millennia and its civilisation so magnificent that the world has not yet seen, its Equal

To begin with, Indian art was merely imitative and not genuinely creative However, as a result of the work of E B Havell, Principal of' the Calcutta School of Art and of Abanindranath Tagore, the painter, there came into existence a new school of art known as the Bengal School of Painting which derived its inspiration from Indian sources from the paintings in the caves of Ajanta and from Rajput and Mughal paintings As it derived its inspiration from traditional Indian sources, it produced art that was real and creative

Abanindranath Tagore and his faithful disciples Surendra Gangoli, Nandlal Bose and Asit Kumar Haldar furthered the cause of reawakening in painting The other artists of this period who earned international fame were

Abdur Rehman Chaghatai and Amrit Sher Gill, Dr A K Coomarswaini has done a lot to emphasize the majesty, splendour and glory of Indian art He completely revolutionised the Western attitude towards Indian art The Schools of Arts in Bombay, Calcutta, Lucknow and Indore have made their contribution towards the revival of painting The names of Fergusson, Percy Brown and Sir John Marshal are also, important this connection

Music and dancing have also been influenced by the Renaissance in India The Sangit Samaj of Calcutta and Jnanottejak Mandir of Bombay have created awakening in the field of music Pandit P N Bhatkhande inaugurated new education in music and infused a new spirit for music among people Vishnu Digambar also tried to revive music His disciples were spread all over Northern India and Bombay Rabindranath Tagore also revived Indian music Many other institutions have been set up at different places like Delhi, Lucknow, Gwalior, Calcutta, Madras, Poona etc , for the promotion of music By his brilliant exposition and masterly demonstration of Indian music, Dilip Kumar Roy won admirers in Western countries By his charming and scientific dances Uday Shanker revived keen interest in Indian dances The other prominent exponents of Indian dances are Rukmani Devi, Ramgopal, Radha, Shriram and Damyanti Joshi

The Renaissance in India revitalized all spheres of life and reawakened the people of India from their lethargy The new spirit found its manifestation in the realms of religion, politics, literature, philosophy and industry The reawakening in the field of politics caused widespread nationalism and the freedom struggle Under the leadership of Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozeshah Mehta Surendranath Banerjee, Gokhale, Tilak, Lajpat Rai, Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Patel, Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose, India won her freedom after a long struggle The reawakening in the social field entirely

changed the social life of the country The, various social evils were removed, a new feeling of unity has dawned in the country The study of Sanskrit has been revived Vernacular languages in India have become rich Fine arts have made progress Progress has been made in the field of science There is an atmosphere of progress all around

64

Political, Cultural and Social Impact of British Rule

The nature of British rule in India and its impact did not remain the same throughout but continued to change with the social, economic and political developments in England The rise of a powerful class of manufacturers as a result of the Industrial Revolution in England had an Indian administration an important impact on politics Another, result of the Industrial Revolution was that large amounts of capital were accumulated in England, which came to be invested in India, in railways, tea plantations, coal mining, jute mills, shipping, trade and banking

The expansion of British dominions in India left behind a blazing trail of discontent and disaffection throughout India This was not confined to the ruling chiefs and royal families of the states conquered by the British or annexed by them on various grounds and not even to the immediate entourage and dependants of those royal courts British rule was not favourably looked upon even by the people at large in any region where it was newly introduced The question of welcoming it did not arise Discontent and disaffection were particularly strong in Burma, Assam, Coorg, Sindh, the Punjab and Avadh The deposition of the ruler of Satara, the despotic coercion of Sindhia and other such acts created a feeling of hatred and hostility against the British The Doctrine of Lapse, particularly

as, applied by Lord Dalhousie, produced great discontentment in the states directly affected and created a sense of alarm among the other Indian states

The policy of wholesale annexation did not unnerve the native rulers alone but affected the people as well The fall of the royal houses of Peshwa, Bhonsle, Avadh, Jhansi, Punjab and Satara and the precarious existence of the rest on the mere sufferance of the British, not only gave a rude shock to, the sentiments of the people, but cat adrift in the world a huge body of people, both high and low, who had hitherto carried their livelihood by service, both civil and military, in those defunct states, Proud aristocracies were reduced to beggary and servitude Artisans and craftsmen who flourished upon the luxury of the court and the wealthy people were faced with utter ruin Old ideas, traditions and pageants of pomp and glory which were dear to the common people, rapidly passed away There was fear and bewilderment on all sides There was a state of uneasy suspense about the future which was aggravated by the new system of administration introduced by the British in India

There was an inherent dislike of the people of a foreign rule The people found it difficult to adjust themselves to the new system of administration which was radically different from the system to which they were accustomed for centuries It affected the vested interests of the classes and individuals who had profited under the old system A large number of pious and learned men and religious and educational institutions flourished under the patronage of the Indian States mainly by the grant of rent-free lands The new Government established by the British in India resumed the rent-lands on a massive scale

through the Inam, Commission That ruined a large number of individuals and institutions

The changes kind experiments in the land revenue system brought misery and ruin both upon the landlords and tenants The cultivation suffered on account of excessive land rent The landlords were dissatisfied as they were deprived the authority which they were accustomed to, exercise for the maintenance of law and order They were reduced in practice to the position of mere farmers of revenue who would be ejected if they failed to pay the land revenue

Even the introduction of the rule of law in place of personal rule dictated by whims and caprices of individuals, gave rise, to discontent It involved the principle of equality in the eye of law It was resented by persons who aimed a privileged position or a preferential treatment which they had enjoyed for ages The poor and the weaker sections of society did not derive much material benefit from them because they were not familiar with the complicated procedure laid down for the rule of law As a matter of fact, it was not intelligible to the masses and involved long delay and heavy expenses which the poor could not afford The people did not find much difference in practice between the tough and ready method of justice of the old days and the new judicial machinery

The new system of police was highly inefficient and there was a general sense of insecurity of life and property A Committee of Parliament reported in 1813 that the police committed "depradations on the peaceable inhabitants of the same nature as those practised by the dacoits whom they were employed to suppress" Lord William Bentinck wrote in 1832, "As for the police, so far from being a protection to the people I cannot better illustrate the public feeling

regarding it, than by the following fact, that nothing can exceed the popularity of a recent regulation by which, if a, robbery has been committed, the police are prevented from making any inquiry into it except upon the requisition of the persons robbed, that is to say, the shepherd is a more ravenous beast of prey than the wolf"

The inefficiency and corruption of the police were vividly described in the following passage quoted in the Calcutta Gazette of 30 April 1827 "It is common in the country when any case of burglary occurs in the house of any person, to prevent, if possible, its coming to the knowledge of the Magistrate, and the person robbed generally contrives to fill up the hole privately, in the course of the night and gives some bribe to the Chowkidars who may discover it the reason of this is, that were he to give publicity to his loss, and make complaint before any public authority he would seldom recover his property, but only have to pay the Amla something from the remainder When a case of theft occurs, the Amla consider it an occasion of profit, and give full vent to their disposition for pillage and plunder"

The following is an extract from a letter published in the Calcutta Gazette of 10 June 1830 "To detect theft, and to prevent the violence of rogues and robbers, the Magistrates have appointed in the various zillas, Police Darogas, Buksees, Muhuris and Peons, but these men inflicted far greater distress on the poor inhabitants than either thieves or robbers can do, for when they come with great power and pomp, they seldom refrain from theft Thieves use some caution in their villainy, but the Darogas and more particularly those belonging to the Police, plunder with violence"

There were certain aspects of British

administration which made it highly unpopular The English officials were not accessible to the people who could not lay their grievances personally before them as they were accustomed to under the native rule The English system of administration operated like a machine There was a lack of personal element in it which was disliked by the people The English laws introduced in India by British officials were strange and not intelligible to the people The British substituted English in place of Persian as the court language This was highly disliked by the Muslims The exclusion of Indian from all high offices, both, in civil administration and the army, was resented as it left no avenues of growth and even maintenance The exclusion of Indians from high offices was resented particularly by the Muslims who had held those offices very recently The view of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was that the permanence and prosperity of the Government depended on an accurate knowledge of the manners, customs, usages, habits, hopes and aspirations and temper and ability of the people and a foreign Government could not possess such knowledge as long as the people were not allowed to participate in the administration of the country

One illustration will suffice to show that Englishmen were not willing to allow any Indian to occupy any important position in the administration Raja Ram Roy was the adopted son of Raja Rammohan Roy After the death of his father in 1833, he was appointed an extra clerk in the offices of the Board of Control by Hobhouse, President of Board of Control, in the hope that his action would have "a beneficial effect on the natives of India generally" by showing them that there was "every disposition on the part of the supreme authority to furnish them with the means and motives of rendering themselves capable of

assisting to a much greater extent than at present, in the administration of India " Hobhouse also proposed to nominate Raja Ram as a writer in the service of the English East India Company It was merely a practical application of the principle laid down, in Section 87 of the Charter Act, of 1833 that no Indian "shall, by reason only of religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them, be disabled from holding any place, office or employment under the East India Company " In spite of that, there was a lot of opposition from British bureaucracy and ultimately the proposal had to be dropped

As a general rule, the British officials treated the Indians with undisguised contempt Sir Syed Ahmed Khan who himself was an official of the East India Company, tells us about the British officials that "their pride and arrogance led them to consider the natives of India as undeserving the name of human beings " Such treatment was "more offensive to Muslims who for centuries past have received special honour and enjoyed special immunities in Hindustan " Another cause of discontent was the denial of any political right to the Indians The Indians who received English education were enthusiastic about British rule in the hope that with the progress of education, the political status of the Indians would be raised and they would get their rightful position in the administration of their country When their hopes were not fulfilled, they felt disappointed and frustrated They failed to get even a single seat in the Legislative Council or a single appointment in the Covenanted Service of the East India Company They resented the rejection of all their demands for reform in the administration When individuals failed to get redress of their grievances, political organisations were set up for that purpose Even then, the British Government held out no hopes of conceding any political reform in a liberal spirit

The administration of the East India Company was corrupt It has been pointed out that "no civilised Government ever existed on the face of the earth which was more corrupt, more perfidious and more rapacious than the Government of East India Company from the year 1765 to 1784" 'Richard Becher, a servant of the East India Company, wrote in May 1769 It must give pain to every Englishman to have reason, to think that since the accession of the Company to the Dewani, the condition of people of the country has been worse than it was before and yet I am afraid the fact is undoubted This fine country which flourished under the most despotic and arbitrary Government is verging towards ruin

The legal system established by the British in India was extremely expensive The parties had to engage lawyers who demanded high fees They had also to pay a high stamp fee in advance for filing a case The procedure of the courts established by the East India Company was highly complicated There was a lot of delay in the decision of cases Many people were ruined by litigation The English language in which the proceedings of the courts were conducted was not intelligible to the people

About the administrative system of the East India Company, Dr R C Majumdar writes that there was security against foreign aggression but not against theft, robbery and crimes and oppressions of other kinds The law courts had not yet become efficient instruments of impartial justice The police served as agencies of oppression rather than protection, The prison house was as wretched as it could be The District Magistrate was determined that the prison should be a distinctly uncomfortable plan The medical officers made a determined effort to keep down the terrible death rate in jail About the amenities of life

in Bengal in 1854, Sir John Strechy wrote, "There were almost no roads, no bridges or schools, and, there was no protection to life or property The police was worthless and robberies and violent crimes by gangs of armed men which were unheard of in other provinces, were common not far from Calcutta"

Dr R C Majumdar sums up the position in these words, "All the while the Indians were mere passive onlookers-they had no place or power in the administration of their own country The curse of slaver with all the attendant evils, so pithily described by Munro, was exercising a ruinous and degenerating influence upon the character of the people at large The early dreams and enthusiastic hopes of the small band of English educated Indians were giving place to disillusion and despair, while the common people, full of discontent, and disaffection, bided their time in sullen resentment, marked by occasional outburst of violence By the time the British completed the first hundred years of their rule, they gained the whole of India, but lost their hold upon the hearts of the Indians

The Government were fully aware of this and made full allowance for this important factor in devising plans for the safety of their Indian Empire"

Impact in Cultural and Social fields

British rule in India brought this country into contact with the and thus Western ideas spread in this country The intellectual life of the people of India began to undergo revolutionary changes through the ideas of democracy, sovereignty of the people, rationalism and humanism These new ideas helped the people of India to examine critically their own society, economy and the true nature of British imperialism in India Modern ideas were spread by the

press, pamphlets, lectures and political parties Modern education was introduced in India after 1813 and it continued to spread through the efforts of the Government, missionaries and private individuals However, the spread of education was very limited Primary education was pratically neglected Higher education was left to private institutions and the Government merely gave grants-in-aid which were insufficient The main object of the education was to help the Government to recruit enough of Indians to fill in the lower branches of the administration The Government was able to pay low salaries to Indians However, modern technical education was completely neglected Emphasis was put on English as the medium of instruction result was that education could not spread to the masses That also created a linguistic and cultural gulf between the educated and the masses The standard of education in the country was not high as adequate funds were not available for that purpose Education was a monopoly of the middle and upper classes and those living in cities and towns

The orthodox and socially reactionary sections of Indian society opposed the introduction of modern education and culture in the country The middle and upper class Indians blindly imitated Western life and culture They copied European in manners and customs and became Europeans in every way except in blood The British also made every effort to impose their culture on India in order to make Indians better customers for their goods That enabled the economic penetration of the country and consolidation of British rule

Indian society was very much influenced by British impact This was particularly so in the cities Modern industries, new means of transport, growing urbanisation and increasing employment of women in

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The main object was to use those institutions for preaching Christianity The Bible was introduced not only in missionary institutions but also in Government schools and colleges Some schools, mainly supposed by the Government, were actually run by clergymen for the spread of Christianity All the evils and abuses of Hinduism were painted in the blackest colours and the blessings of Christianity were described in glowing phrases and salvation was offered to those who became the followers of Jesus Christ Public prison houses were used as instruments for conversions to Christianity Fifty abuses were showered on Hindu gods and goddesses Sir Syed Ahmed Khan tells us that civil and military officers helped the missionaries in their activities The latter openly preached in mosques and temples and abused other religious because a Chaprasi or a policeman accompanied them A series of letters were written and I and particularly to these letters were addressed generally to the public and particularly to those Indian who held respectable appointments in the service of state It was stated in those letters that as the railway system united the different extremes of India, it was necessary that there should be only one religion in India and that was possible if every one embraced Christianity Sir Syed Ahmed Khan writes, "These letters so terrified the natives that they were as people struck blind or from under whose feet' the ground had suddenly slipped away All felt' convinced that the hour so long anticipated had at last arrived And that the servants of the Government first and then the whole population would have to embrace Christianity

When railways and telegraphs were first introduced in India, the people considered them as ingenious devices for breaking the social order and Caste rules, and thus prepare the way for mass

conversion to Christianity In the case of railway where people of all classes and castes had to sit together and it was not possible to absence proper rules about bath and food, the intention of the Christian Government to convert the Hindus to Christianity was clear

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan tells us that during the general famine of 1837 orphans were converted Christianity and that confirmed the fears of the Indians

Industrial development in India resulted in the growth of two new social classes viz , the industrial capitalist class and modern working class These two classes because modern mines, industries and means of transport were new These classes represented a new system of economic organisation, new social relations, new ideas and a new outlook They possessed an all-India outlook

To begin with, the British encouraged the social and religious reformers but later on withdrew their support from them and gradually sided with the socially orthodox and conservative elements of society To meet the growing challenge of nationalism in the country, Englishmen followed the policy of divide and rule and actively encouraged communalism and casteism which strengthened the reactionary forces in society

There were powerful forces for social change among the lower castes and women, Led by men such as Jotiba Phule, the lower castes built up powerful movements from the end of the 19th century The lower castes in Kerala and other parts of South India organised themselves during the 1920's and 1980's to fight against the socio-economic oppression by the upper castes Women and tribal people rose in defence

Index